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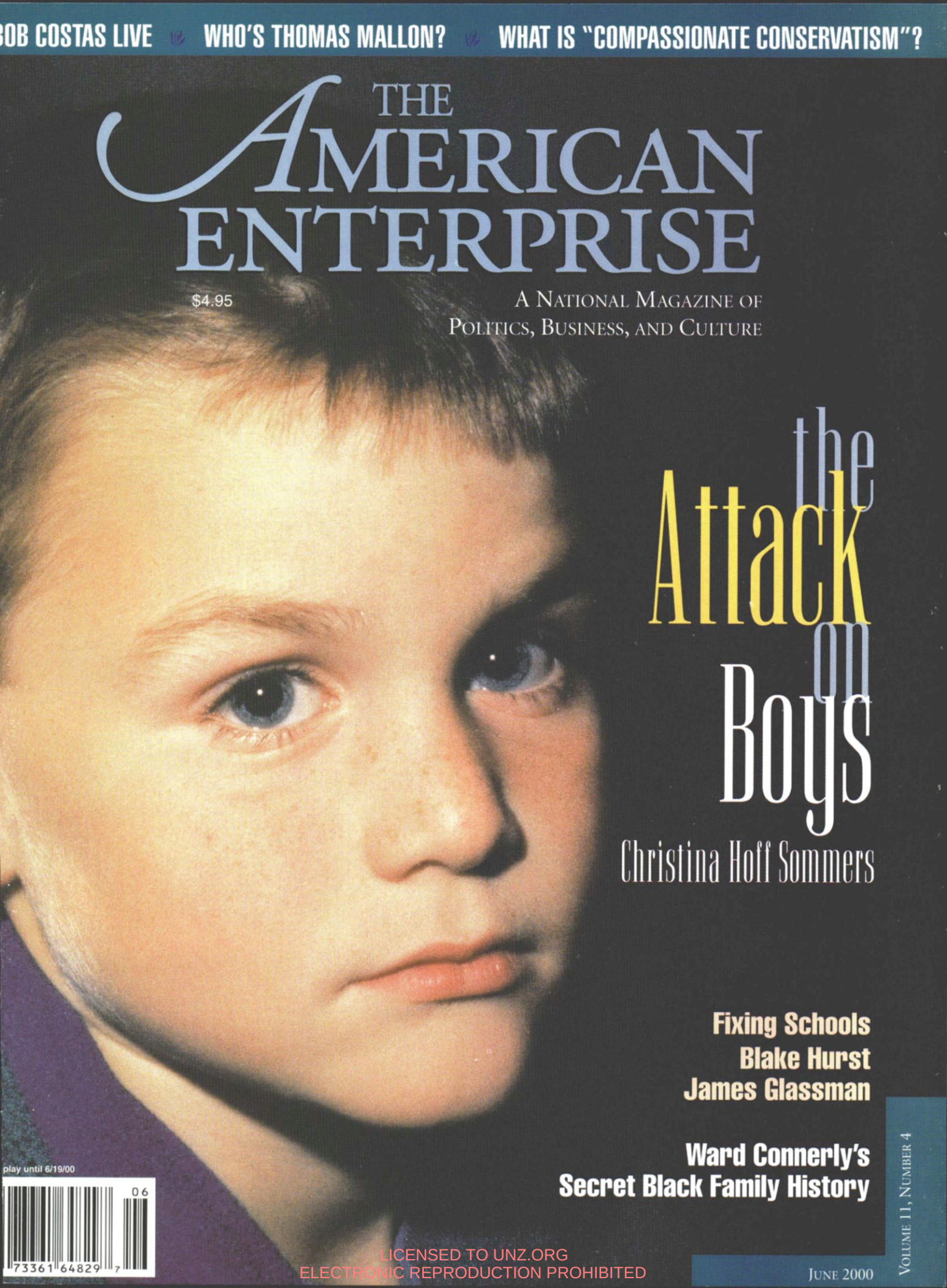

The Attack on Boys

Christina Hoff Sommers

Fixing Schools
Blake Hurst
James Glassman

Ward Connerly's Secret Black Family History

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Volume 11, Number 4

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THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

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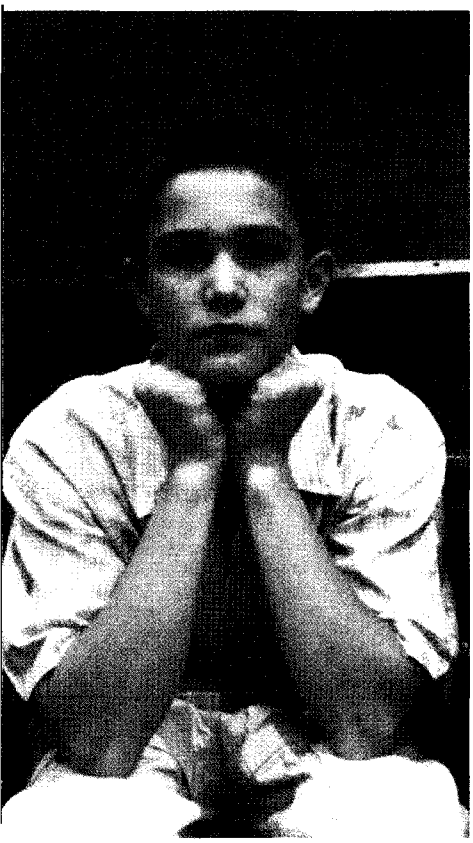

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Bird's Eye

KARL ZINSMEISTER

Let Boys Be Boys

A few months ago, my 13-year-old son read James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* in school. From a teenage boy's point of view this great story of frontier life in eighteenth-century New York state has it all—Indians, Redcoats, bears, daring escapes, even a sharpshooting hero named Hawkeye. It also includes, very tangentially, a light romantic plot.

When it came time to write an essay about the story, my son enthusiastically whipped up something in you-are-there diary form, chronicling first-person battles with wild animals, racing rivers, and duplicitous enemies. As a finishing touch he added drops of artificial blood to an entry that tailed off in mid sentence!

He did not, however, mention any romance. And for that he was, to his great puzzlement, marked down a few points by his teacher (let's call her Ms. Smith). His response was, "What? I even mix up some cool artificial blood and all Ms. Smith picks up on is that?"

The written questions the teacher gave the class focused heavily on matters of the heart. Her instructions refer to "feelings" or "emotions" seven different times, as in "What are your feelings about the French and Indian War?" My son was completely stumped.

This was a schizophrenic moment for me as a parent. I told my son that the teacher is the teacher, and you have to rise to the occasion and give her what she wants. But inside, a part of me was thinking, "Gee, I would have bombed this too. Here's this rich historical backdrop. Action everywhere—arrows thunking into flesh, bodies crashing over waterfalls. And she asks about personal feelings?"

I thought of this incident as I assembled our cover story. In it, Christina Hoff Sommers argues that "progressive" reforms and exaggerated feminist attitudes have rooted so deeply in schools and other parts of American society as to sometimes make boys feel like strangers in a land where no one speaks their language.

The documentation of this problem comes not in trivial anecdotes like mine but rather in worrisome evidence which shows that over the last couple decades fewer and fewer boys have been succeeding in school. For instance, of all the U.S. high school students who don't make it to college at present, fully two-thirds are male. Boys of all income groups, races, and ethnicities are now less likely than comparable girls to work themselves into the college pipeline.

Boys from blue-collar families are particularly suffering. Among kids in families earning $80,000-100,000 per year, girls are 8 percent likelier to be on a college track than their brothers. At family incomes of $10,000-20,000 this swells to 56 percent likelier.

In today's schools, young boys often find it harder to sit still and digest the curriculum than their female counterparts do, suggests Marty Bolles, who works in the San Antonio city schools. Many are quickly branded discipline problems. Boys often "don't have male role models at home, due to rising divorce and single parenthood," Bolles notes, and they're even less likely to find them at school—in Texas, only 23 percent of public school teachers are men.

"When you see the aspirations of boys and girls at an earlier age, they're high," educator Gilberto Ramon recently told the *San Antonio Express-News*. Yet by the time graduation rolls around, a shrinking number of males are still successful and motivated. "So something happens between the time they have those aspirations and the time they graduate." That "something" is the subject of Sommers' investigation on pages 20-25.

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One upshot: By the time today's high school freshmen leave college, only 41 percent of bachelor's degrees will go to young males, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. That has tumbled from 57 percent in 1970.

Contrary to claims of male advantage, boys are not nearly so hardy as they seem. Right from conception, males are more susceptible than females to disease, developmental difficulty, and environmental damage. Although 140 males are conceived for every 100 females, 35 of these male fetuses will perish during gestation. At birth, females are four to six weeks more mature neurologically than males, a difference which persists in their earlier acquisition of language, verbal fluency, and memory retention. Boys outnumber girls by more than 2 to 1 in special education classes. Communication disabilities like stuttering and dyslexia are several times more prevalent among males than females, while reading blockages and other learning problems are three to five times as common. Males are more often color-blind and left-handed, and suffer more night terrors. They are three times as likely to be autistic, and experience much more schizophrenia, hyperactivity, delinquency, suicide, and homicide than females. They far oftener end up homosexual.

One observer has described the male as "a bundle of energies that is always threatening to disintegrate. The female is much more stable and secure." Psychologist Dee Shepherd-Look writes in the *Handbook of Child Development* that "until adulthood it is difficult to find a pathological condition in which the incidence among females is higher than among males." Even as adults, men have weaker immune systems, twice as much heart disease, less elastic blood vessels, and more alcoholism. And that doesn't even begin to get into matters like trustworthiness, closeness to God, and ability to remember a birthday. Anyone arguing that males are the "higher" sex has a lot of explaining to do.

Males *are*, however, different. And one side effect of this is that many young boys are now grindingly ill-matched to the schools and other institutions that receive them. Much of this is due to feminist refusal to accept the idea that boys and girls are different. The idea that there might be specifically male tendencies toward aggressiveness, stoicism, shorter attention span, lower verbal and relational skills, higher spatial and logical skills, and so forth, and that society should accept and work with these tendencies, has become politically incorrect to the point of being a firing offense. If boys act differently from girls, that's an individual defect to be cured, goes the liberal wisdom.

Elite refusal to accept the more commonsensical view that boys and girls develop to somewhat different internal rhythms is having tragic effects. "Put a boy in a school with a curriculum designed for girls and taught by women whose main desire in life is that boys behave like girls," warns author Leon Podles, "and any self-respecting boy will likely end up with the attitude of Huck Finn toward 'sivilization.'"

Podles suggests that in schools today, "boys are allowed to stay if they will agree to behave like girls." Significant numbers of boys, particularly those from poor and blue-collar families, won't go along. And "Why should they? Why can't some schools be run for boys by men?"

It would be unfair to blame all the stresses on boys today on over-zealous feminism. But feminists who attack the "mystique" of masculinity and rail against everything from professional sports to toy swords for embodying ugly male values (see professor Myriam Miedzian's book *Boys Will Be Boys: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence* for a run-of-the-mill example) show no understanding whatever of male psychology. Rather than fantasizing that all boys can be re-made into pliant, expressive, non-violent little model students, we ought to be seeking ways to direct male rambunction into constructive uses.

It seems obvious, for instance, that the way to convert male tendencies toward aggression into something positive is through traditionally male channels and male languages. But that will require they be exposed to *more* authentic masculinity, not less. The bulk of our problems with male violence today grow out of having too little masculine authority at the base of society, not too much. The most dangerous males in America are presently those raised in our inner-city matriarchies. All those rap anthems about raping and torturing women come out of a world wholly devoid of male control.

THE MOST DANGEROUS MALES IN AMERICA ARE THOSE RAISED IN OUR INNER-CITY MATRIARCHIES.

The shock troops of America's urban decline are almost all recruited from the ranks of fatherless boys. To try to compensate for their lack of male exemplars we should be experimenting with strict all-male urban boarding schools. Perhaps these could be staffed by decommissioned military officers—who know something about how to build discipline, self-respect, and productive morale in restless young charges.

Alas, recent efforts to set up even much more conventional schools for endangered boys have been quickly squashed by feminist absolutism. A few years ago I interviewed the principals of two special elementary schools that the Detroit and Milwaukee public education systems tried to establish specifically for black boys who lack positive male direction. These were smart, tough black men trying to address a mortal crisis in their communities. And they were absolutely livid that out-of-town lawsuits brought on feminist grounds by the National Organization for Women and the American Civil Liberties Union had blocked their projects. As Leon Podles has commented in bitter amazement, "Better many black boys die bleeding from gunshot wounds than allow any government policy that presupposes there are significant differences between the male and female of the species, and that the differences sometimes work to the disadvantage of the male."

And it isn't just underclass children who are being hurt by the taboo against acting upon sex differences. In his book *Papers from the Headmaster: Reflections on a World Fit for Children*, Richard Hawley describes his gradual conversion on this subject after going to work at a private all-boys school. "I had

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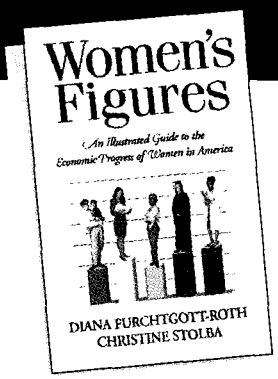
chosen the school because I needed the job.... I was, if anything, unfavorably disposed to the idea of an all-male student body.... But I was surprised."

Compared to co-ed schools where Hawley had taught previously, the single-sex alternative showed a special power to motivate certain boys—because it was built specifically on qualities that "have for centuries been stirringly attractive to boys." Questing, striving, weathering personal hardships and exposure to danger, adhering to ideals despite temptations not to—these "have rested at the heart of boys' schools and of boys' stories from the earliest recorded history."

Obviously there can be crummy boys' schools just as there are ill-run schools of all sorts. But there is good evidence that most boys enrolled in all-male schools do much better than boys in co-ed schools. (See, for instance, Anthony Bryk and Valery Lee, *Journal of Educational Psychology* #78, 1986.)

Keeping the all-boys school alive for young males who need or want it is only the tip of this iceberg, however. The larger goal should be to get everyday co-ed schools—and all the other establishments that deal with boys—to be more open to the distinctive needs of each sex, and more willing to address themselves to boys and girls differently on occasions where that will serve the children better. This may sound commonsensical. But it is, alas, almost impossible under the progressive nostrums that now reign in our schools and many other public institutions.

GOOD *Thinking*



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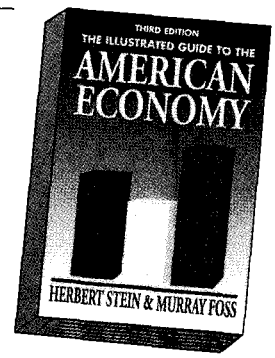

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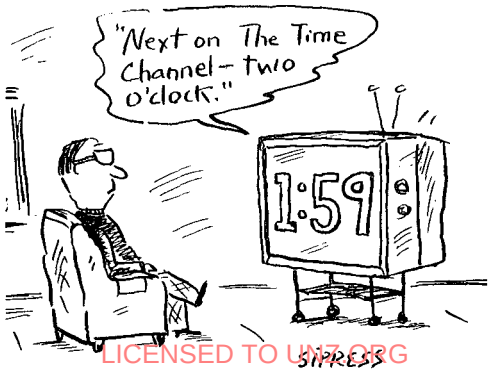
Sidelights

A California man attempted to auction his soul to the highest bidder on eBay.com, but the company stopped the sale, saying he had no proof the merchandise existed. ❦ Governor and welfare reform pioneer **Tommy G. Thompson** is trumpeting a new study that shows three-quarters of welfare recipients who stopped receiving cash benefits under the new program have found either jobs or other means of support. "Most also had higher incomes," reports the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. ❦ Skittish about efforts to raise academic standards in the nation's schools, Education Secretary **Richard Riley** recently warned that some students are being "traumatized, not challenged." ··· A recent poll commissioned by *Education Week* "raises questions about whether the standards movement has yet succeeded in changing practices and expectations in the majority of public school classrooms." Half the teachers surveyed say students are still passed based on effort, not actual learning. ··· For the third year in a row, roughly three-quarters of college professors and employers report high school graduates lack good writing skills and work habits. ❦ The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts employment will rise 14 percent between 1998 and 2008, by 20.3 million jobs. ❦ This year's "green book," a Treasury Department explanation of the administration's tax proposals, is 221 pages long. Last year it was 198 pages, up from 153 pages the previous year, the *Wall Street Journal* reports. ··· House Ways and Mean Chairman **Bill Archer** (R-Texas) objects to "death taxes": "No one should have to visit the undertaker and the IRS on the same day." ❦ Providence College, a Catholic institution in Rhode Island, suspended three students who posted pro-abortion fliers with a picture of the Virgin **Mary**. The students said the flier was meant to shock, not insult. ··· An Arkansas man who "mooned" the judge trying him was given ten months in jail for contempt.

Mickey Kaus, a liberal columnist for *Slate*, writes that reporters "*hate* **Gore**. They really do think he's a liar. And a phony. They dislike the controlled, canned nature of his campaign events, and hate covering them." ··· Media critic **Scott Shuger** notes that when the *Los Angeles Times* was recently bought by another newspaper company, the *Times* reported its selling price at $6.46 billion, while the *New York Times* put the price at $6.45 billion, the *Wall Street Journal* claimed $5.9 billion, and the *Washington Post* said $8 billion. ❦ As controversies flare over mixing religion and politics, the Catholic League points out the major media's silence over this scene inside the Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church in Queens, New York: Pastor **Floyd Flake** declares, "I don't do endorsements from across the pulpit because I never know who's out there watching the type of laws that govern separation of church and state.... But I will say to you this morning, and you read it well: This should be the next President of the United States." Flake then puts his arm around Vice President Gore. ❦ Even though the Supreme Court has tried to rein in "punitive damage" awards in lawsuits, the top ten verdicts in 1999 totaled $9 billion, triple the amount for 1998 and 12 times the 1997 figure, former attorney general **Dick Thornburgh** complains. ··· ABC's **John Stossel** recently profiled **Dave** and **Donna Batelaan**. They are both disabled and run a disabled-friendly store that sells and repairs wheelchairs and related products. Yet they were sued for not having specially marked handicapped parking spots for their almost entirely handicapped clientele. ··· The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defended in court a man who was denied a train dispatcher's job because of a condition that can cause him to lose consciousness: "While consciousness is obviously necessary to perform" the job, the agency conceded, "it is not itself a job function." ❦ A study of Washington, D.C. students attending private schools on privately funded vouchers found that black elementary school students were happier with their schools and outperformed their public school peers in math. ··· The SAT now tracks homeschoolers' performance. Last year homeschoolers averaged 67 points above the national average, even though their family incomes were below average. ❦ The City Council of Boulder, Colorado, voted unananimously to add "gender variance"—"a persistent sense that one's gender identity is incongruent with one's biological sex"—to the city's Human Rights Ordinance. The Council did, however, permit employers to require a "reasonably consistent gender presentation," defined as limiting workers to three gender changes each 18 months. ❦ A new business book, *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break: W. C. Fields on Business*, recalls the comic's advice: "If at first you don't succeed, try again. Then quit. There's no use being a damn fool about it."

—*SW*



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SCAN

BUSHWHACKED?

Ward Connerly, the nation's leading opponent of racial preferences whose new autobiography we extract on pages 36-40, has his concerns about presidential candidate George W. Bush. Though applauding the idea of Bush's "compassionate conservatism" as well as much of what the governor has done in Texas, Connerly was "disappointed" that Bush "was missing in action in the campaign to end race preferences in Houston."

Nor has his personal experience with the governor and his handlers reassured Connerly. For many months the Bush camp gave Connerly an elaborate runaround as to whether the two would meet to discuss preferences, with George W. at one point running into Connerly in Austin and personally assuring him the meeting would occur.

Nothing happened until the conservative press began speculating Connerly was being snubbed. Then the governor's campaign called to say Bush would be touring California and wanted Connerly by his side. Still no arrangements were forthcoming. Connerly bought a table for a Bush fundraising speech in San Francisco. "In the receiving line, Bush grabbed my shoulder and blurted out, 'Did you see I'm talking about need-based affirmative action now rather than race-based?' I told him I was glad to hear it, shook his hand, and moved on. Bush finally flew back to Texas without having the dialogue about preferences I thought we were going to have.

"That dialogue," Connerly writes, "still hasn't taken place. Bush has not exactly dodged the issue of preferences; he just hasn't confronted it directly, and gives evidence of hoping he is nimble enough to keep it from catching up to him. His evasive technique was on display in California when he said, 'I support the spirit of no quotas, no preferences.' But this 'spirit' did not include Proposition 209, the state law whose principles he pointedly declined to endorse when asked about it at a news conference. As columnist John Leo observed, this was like saying you were for the spirit of fair housing and then refusing to endorse fair housing laws.

"The calculated ambiguity of George W.'s remarks—particularly the way he drags the red herring of already-illegal 'quotas' across his statements on affirmative action—is so well calibrated that the liberal *New York Times* has praised him for his 'moderate' opinions on the issue, while the conservative *Washington Times* also feels that he is saying the right things. But watching him do the Texas two-step on preferences, my fear is that George W. may be talking out of both sides of his mouth."

UNFOUNDING AMERICA

New Jersey schoolchildren have been protected from contact with the evil words of a hate-filled document—the Declaration of Independence.

The state legislature was on the verge of passing a bill this winter requiring public school students to recite the "We hold these truths…" paragraph of the Declaration each day. The bill also mandated that students be taught about the less-than-perfect state of equality that existed when the Declaration was written. But that didn't prevent opponents from leaping to block the measure.

In a speech the *Philadelphia Inquirer* described as "fiery," State Senator Wayne Bryant (D-Camden), "thundered" that the Declaration's talk of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness "was an affront to his slave ancestors." He said reciting the Declaration would be "forcing students to relive slavery."

"I would never allow my grandchildren to stand in class and repeat these words," he insisted. "It's another way of being exclusionary, unfeeling, insensitive to a large majority of the population."

And so Democrats killed the bill.

Don't expect many young New Jerseyans to pledge their lives, fortunes, and sacred honors the next time certain unalienable rights are threatened.

AMERICAN CAESARISM IN BANGLADESH

We've complained repeatedly about the imperial trappings accumulating around the presidency during the Clinton administration (see *TAE* March 2000, page 8, and March/April 1999, page 10). The latest evidence came in President Clinton's March trip to India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

The Air Force estimates that when the totals are in some months from now, the

IT'S GREEK TO HIM

When asked whether he had visited the Parthenon during his visit to Greece, basketball star Shaquille O'Neal replied, "I can't really remember the names of the clubs that we went to."

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flight costs alone of the President's "protected sightseeing" (as ABC News characterized the trip) across the Asian subcontinent will come to $50-75 million.

It's not easy to imagine how someone could blow that much on one trip, until you realize that the presidential entourage included nearly *80* aircraft, including 26 huge C-5 and C-17 cargo planes.

We'd be happy to pay for 100 Secret Service men and some foreign policy advisors on one plane and the President and his family and staffers on *Air Force One.* But 80 aircraft, a mobile news spin factory, and up to $75 million for one jaunt stinks of Caesarism to us.

And we suspect that to many citizens of other lands, where $50-75 million could keep entire cities of families alive for a full year, that sort of obscene imperial pampering of our chief executive must look like ugly Americanism.

JAPAN'S MESS OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Since Japan's collapse in 1990, there have been ten "stimulus" packages sponsored by Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, totaling nearly $1 trillion. This gush of government spending has been followed by repeated disappointments and a resumption of *negative* growth, with disastrous consequences for Japanese households and businesses. Their losses have totaled over $15 *trillion*. The Japanese economy went back into recession at the end of 1999, with annualized growth rates of negative 3.9 percent in the third quarter and negative 5.5 percent for the fourth quarter.

Public finances have reached the danger point. Japanese government debt now totals over $6 trillion, and during the fiscal year beginning this April new government borrowing will increase that by an additional $450 billion. That is comparable to a U.S. budget deficit of $900 billion in one year—over three times worse than anything we experienced in our very worst deficit years.

—adapted from the American Enterprise Institute Economic Outlook *by* **John Makin**, *April 2000*

WHO'S IRRESPONSIBLE?

The Tax Foundation has just calculated that under the tax reform plan proposed by Governor George W. Bush, Bush's own federal income taxes would be cut by $32,872. (Needless to say, Bush pays a lot to the feds—a total of more than $3.8 million in 1998, the latest year available.)

Under the plan proposed by Vice President Gore, meanwhile, Bush's personal taxes would be trimmed by $45,264. So much for the Vice President's claim that the Bush tax cut would be "irresponsible" and give away too much to wealthy people like the Texas governor.

NO, WE ARE NOT MAKING THIS UP

Harper's, established in 1850, is one of America's largest and most prominent serious magazines. In March it printed a major article, complete with footnotes and lewd photo, about, well, testicle art. The article profiles one Matthew Barney, referred to by the *Harper's* editor who wrote the piece as a "genius"—a characterization many others in the modern art world apparently agree with, given that Barney has been called "the most crucial artist of his generation" by the *New York Times* and awarded the prestigious Hugo Boss Prize of the Guggenheim Museum.

We don't trust ourselves to paraphrase the *Harper's* story in all its earnestness; so we'll just quote it:

"Matthew Barney is the Michelangelo of genital art, the supreme master of the genre, whose work so transcends the run-of-the-mill video artist masturbating in his studio that he also may be said to bring his tradition to its unsurpassable realization.... The great challenge facing each genital artist is one of visual discrimination.... After viewing a few thousand photographs or videos featuring genitalia (and their excrementa) in various poses and states of mutilation...it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish among the works of different artists.... Barney's work, as it sets about redeeming genital art, also moves beyond it, revealing it to be a style of world-historical significance....

"His first major piece, *Field Dressing*, revealed the naked young Yale graduate sliding up and down a metal pole, carefully and repeatedly applying cooled Vaseline to all his orifices....

"[In] his next major work, *Blind Perineum*...the artist used mountain-climbing gear to clamber about naked on the walls and ceiling of the Barbara Gladstone Gallery. Still, the public and critical establishment seemed resistant to the power of the work.... Barney replied with *Radical Drill*, in which he performed football blocking exercises wearing a black evening gown and high-heeled shoes.... *Drawing Restraint 7*, which appeared a few years later in the 1993 Whitney Biennial, featured Barney costumed as a goat-boy named Kid, along with a couple of satyrs who spend much of the video wrestling in the back of a limo, repeatedly penetrating Manhattan via the island's tunnels and bridges....

"[Barney] is not burdened with a fashionable concern for 'the other.' What distinguishes Barney's Onanism from other varieties of genital art is its persistent self-regard; Onanism is all about the self, Barney's self."

To which we add—You can say that again. Rubes that we are, we read this multi-page article twice and then did independent research to convince ourselves this wasn't an April Fool's parody of modern art critics. Sorry, folks. We must report that Matthew Barney and his fabulous testicle art are real, and winning prizes, and inspiring reveries in our oldest intellectual magazines.

"Onanism may be the only original and vital artistic movement in the world today," the *Harper's* article concludes in its final sentence. Given the extreme aridity of modern art, there may be a certain truth to that.

HURRAY FOR IMPUNITY

From the latest edition of Propositions, *by David Blankenhorn:*

For people who worry about marriage as a social institution, simply paying attention can now be disconcerting. Here are two examples.

• In Mississippi, the heart of the Bible Belt, Governor Kirk Fordice, age 65, announces his decision to seek a divorce from Pat, his wife of many years. Pat is not amused. About that time, the gover-

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nor begins taking trips to France and to Gulf Shores, Alabama, with his former sweetheart from his junior high school days in Memphis, Tennessee. These facts get reported in the media. Fordice is livid. He announces that he considered resigning "just to keep from going through this [publicity] in trying to have a transition from one marriage into another, which is done all the time with complete impunity and no publicity." Fordice is correct. This is done all the time with complete impunity.

• Wendy Wasserstein, the Pulitzer-prize winning playwright, had a baby girl, Lucy, on September 12, 1999. And, according to the *New York Times,* "what a production it was!" Meryl Streep dropped by the hospital to see the baby. An important costume designer decorated the hospital room. Lots of impressive theater people came to visit. "If you haven't won a Tony, can you go?" quipped a well-known set designer. The baby's father "was not announced," according to the *Times.* Ms. Wasserstein, it turns out, had decided "to have the baby alone." The *Times* continues, "Still, there are a large number of men, gay and straight, whom Ms. Wasserstein regards as 'husbands.' They include [a number of impressive theater people]. She knew that no child of hers would lack for 'fathers.'"

AGENDAS IN JOURNALISM

The April release of a Freedom Forum complaint that "the overall percentage of journalists of color in newsrooms increased by just 1.2 percentage points between 1994 and 1999," inspired this misty daydream from Indiana University journalism professor Steve Salerno:

BLOOMINGTON, Indiana, April 2000—The highly regarded School of Journalism and the legendary basketball program of Indiana University today announced a cooperative venture designed to eradicate historical patterns of race bias in their respective realms. Starting immediately, all of the school's black basketball players must begin preparing instead for careers in journalism, and all white journalism students must prepare for careers in the NBA. The move comes on the heels of a complaint by the Freedom Forum that even though the percentage of blacks in journalism has tripled since 1978, too few minorities now work in journalism.

Noting that the study found many minority journalists choose to leave their jobs after short periods of employment, the university will require all black students to pledge that they will not leave a newsroom job under any circumstance. Asked whether the new policy bears an uncomfortable resemblance to slavery, a spokesperson replied, "We don't care. It's essential to have the black agenda reflected in daily journalism."

The spokesperson seemed annoyed when reminded that most minority journalists in the Forum study reported healthy relationships with their supervisors and "good" or "excellent" advancement opportunities. "You're focusing on the positive," he snapped. "That's not the way we do things in this country." He added, "We have to keep doggedly cataloguing these racial numbers, otherwise we'll never reach true colorblindness."

Similarly, the National Organization for Women dismissed the study's little-mentioned finding that neither racial nor gender bias appear to play a role in newsroom assignments. A NOW press release observed that the organization endorses "only those statistics that support our cause."

Reached for comment, Indiana basketball coach Bobby Knight applauded the university's initiative, noting that most journalism students are shorter and thus "easier to choke." (He then accidentally smashed the interviewer.)

The university's decision may spark a trend. Purdue announced it is considering a partnership between its famous school of engineering and the locally based Eli Lilly Company, makers of Prozac—the hope being to introduce more women to engineering and more men to depression. And New York's New School for Social Research is said to be brainstorming for ways to have greater numbers of women convicted in capital-murder cases, thereby reducing the male-female disparity on death row.

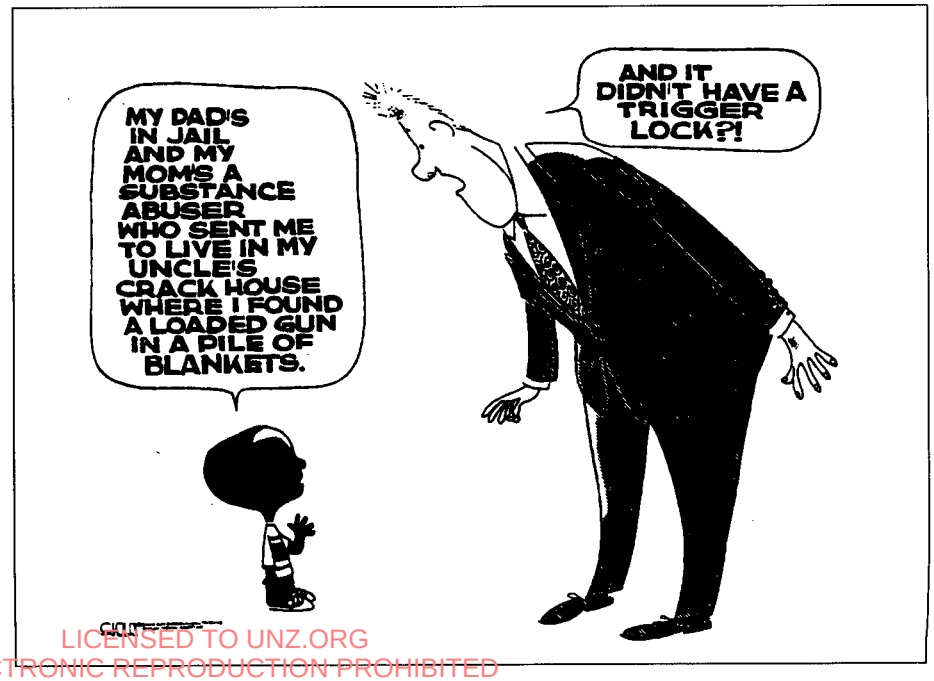
RUN AGAINST LAWYERS!

As he searches for some way to start a prairie fire across America, Governor George W. Bush ought to consider a new way of selling himself: as the unlawyer.

America's disdain for lawyers is palpable. They're even more unpopular than the press. And rarely has the record of the profession America loves to hate ever been so dirty.

The only two lawyers elected to the Presidency since the 1930s were Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton. Does America need another law school seatwarmer in Al Gore?

The Clinton-Gore White House is packed full of lawyers, more than have



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SHAMELESS EXPLOITER

Speaking at a Democratic fundraiser in New York City an hour after an inner-city gang member shot up the National Zoo on April 24, wounding seven bystanders, Al Gore continued the shameless Clinton-Gore pattern of politically exploiting gun crimes for all they're worth.

"We really have to have mandatory child safety trigger locks," he clucked, ignoring the fact that such shootings aren't accidents committed by innocent children, but intentional acts by criminals toting guns for just such uses—people who wouldn't put child safety locks on their guns even if the penalty were amputation.

Not to give Mr. Gore any new ideas.

worked in any previous administration. Some of the results? Just after a federal court rules against him, the most powerful attorney in America says his administration was simply following the "rule of law" when it sent federal agents brandishing automatic weapons to break down the door of a Miami family.

That same attorney-in-chief spends much of his administration throwing lawyerly obstructions at other federal and state courts. And when members of a federal grand jury ask about the truthfulness of his testimony to them, he says, It depends on what the meaning of "is" is.

Vanderbilt Law School attendee Al Gore, caught violating the law prohibiting campaign fundraising on federal property, argues there's "no controlling legal authority" that says he couldn't do it.

Then there's the ocean of sharks in private legal practice, filing new lawsuits at rates two and a half times faster than the growth of the nation's population. Half of all high-tech companies have now been sued, convenient deep pockets that they are. And the costs of our tort system exceed $150 billion.

No less an authority than Erin Brockovich illustrates why a populist movement for legal reform is possible: "I hate lawyers," she says in her movie, "I just work for 'em."

Even when unpopular targets like breast implant manufacturers are involved, there are signs of a backlash against today's legal bandits. One notorious barrister, John O'Quinn of Texas, is now being sued by some of his former clients, who complain he swindled them out of their settlement money. In fact, over half of the dollars collected by our tort system are being kept by lawyers and the system itself, rather than the people claiming injury.

This judicial game has done more than just enrich lawyers or cost Americans piles of money. Makers of medical devices, for instance, are now more reluctant to produce innovative products for fear of being sued. Women's health pioneer Dr. Elizabeth Connell, who chaired the Food and Drug Administration hearings on implants, told *TAE* that lawyers' institutionalization of junk science has "proved to be among the most contentious, costly, and dangerous events to occur in women's health care."

It's time to make runaway lawyers a part of our national debate.

TOUGHENING UP ON CAMPUS

Reform-minded governors in several states have begun to make their state colleges a bit more rigorous and a bit less politically correct. In one of the more encouraging shifts, the trustees of the State University of New York system (SUNY) voted to require a core curriculum in all of the state's 17 four-year colleges.

Beginning with the Class of '04, students will have to pass ten courses, including at least one each in American history, Western civilization, and math, as well as courses in natural science, non-Western civilization, and foreign languages.

Some liberal faculty complained the requirements were too "mainstream." "This is probably the best idea of 1955," sniffed professor Vincent Aceto. But SUNY Trustee Candace de Russy noted that "the public is increasingly aware of the knowledge deficit on the part of our college graduates," and described this action by board members appointed by Republican Governor George Pataki as an attempt to begin remedying that. "I fully expect SUNY's action will increase the pressure to raise general-education standards in other states," responded Tom Carroll, chairman of the Center for Excellence in Higher Education.

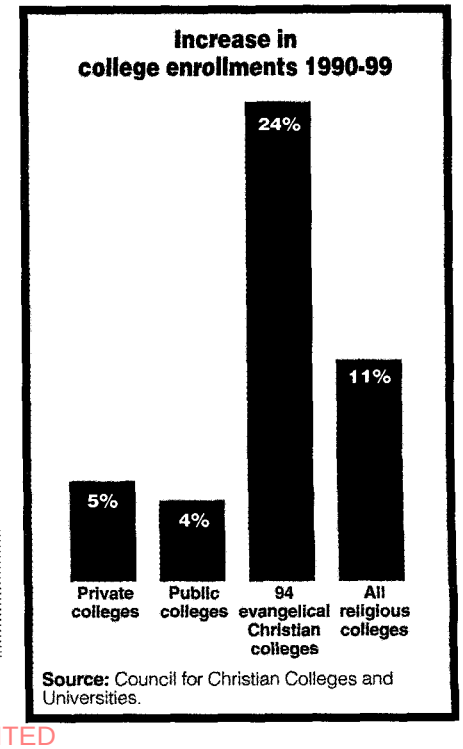
Simultaneously, a majority of the trustees of the City University of New York (the New York City college system) have now been appointed by Governor Pataki and New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and they too are raising standards to end the decades-long decline of that university. Their first step—met with vociferous opposition from faculty and students—was to end remedial education in the system's ten four-year colleges. More efforts to spur excellence in education are planned.

—Michael Capel *is a recent graduate of Cornell University.*

THE NEW FACE OF COLLEGE CHRISTIANITY

You probably knew Asians are disproportionately enrolled in the nation's top universities. But did you know they also stand out in the Christian organizations at those same schools? Although Asians number fewer than 4 percent of the U.S. population and around 15 percent of the student body at top colleges, many of the Christian clubs at places like Berkeley and Yale are now majority Asian.

And these aren't small, marginal groups. They're typically larger than any other single student group. "Asian-dominated Christian fellowships" regularly attract hundreds of students at



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Harvard, Stanford, and the University of Chicago, reports David Cho of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. At Columbia, Cho notes, 20 players clash weekly in the chess club, and about 40 College Republicans meet twice a month, but "every Thursday, up to 110 students, nearly all Asians, gather at the school's Campus Crusade for Christ," the largest of Columbia's 17 official Christian groups.

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a national evangelical group, counts 650 chapters across the country. Its Asian-American enrollments grew by 267 percent in the last 15 years, and by 605 percent at New York and New Jersey colleges. Some all-Asian Christian organizations have grown even faster.

"The professional world will soon experience an influx of highly educated Asian students," Cho summarizes, "who have conservative political leanings and would support burgeoning evangelical movements."

CLINTON'S POLICE STATE

The Clinton administration doesn't understand the differing responsibilities held by different levels of American government. Untroubled by Washington bloat, the administration has, for instance, increasingly tried to assert federal control over local schools. Worse, the Clintonites have promoted a kind of liberal police state through a creeping federalization of criminal law.

The President's most repeated proposal for his final year in office (mentioned in no fewer than 130 presidential speeches and papers) is to corrupt the federal criminal code by providing special interest groups with their own "hate crimes" categories. The administration would grant special status in federal civil rights law to "sexual orientation," "gender," and "disability." This would, to put it mildly, introduce a certain vagueness into law. Clinton himself has admitted there will be "a lot of questions about whether or not rape is motivated by hate or not."

Clinton and Gore have already created several dozen new federal capital offenses in other areas; new "hate crimes" laws would do more of the same. Such proposals make for happy audiences at gatherings like the Democratic National Committee Gay and Lesbian Luncheon, the Congressional Black Caucus, Anti-Defamation League conventions, and the DNC Hispanic Dinner. But the costs of this posturing may be high. The degree of punishment for an assault, theft, or murder would be based, not on the evil of the crime, but on the race, religion, or sexual practices of the victim, or the politics (however noxious) of the perpetrator. In addition, such laws would make bad intent (which is always subjective) sharply magnify the significance of less heinous acts.

Federal prosecutions—with their overwhelming powers and stiff penalties—should be remedies of last, not first, resort. Lately, we've been doing the reverse, shredding concepts of double jeopardy and making agencies like the FBI and federal judiciary ever larger and more imperious.

A "shapeless and all-embracing statute can serve as a dangerous instrument of political intimidation and coercion," noted a Supreme Court opinion penned right after the Nuremburg trials. Often this happens in two stages. "Evil men are rarely given power; they take it over from better men to whom it had been entrusted," the Justices observed.

President Clinton's proposals would allow federal prosecutions even if acts of violence were not intended to impair constitutional rights. This could allow federal prosecutions for almost any inadvertently wrongful arrest, giving federal authorities a whip hand over state and local law enforcement. Keep in mind that state and local prosecutors are elected for fixed terms and not readily controlled by politicians, while federal law enforcement is highly centralized and easily politicized. All federal prosecutors serve at the pleasure of the President, as was made clear at the start of Clinton's term when he made an unprecedented clean sweep of all of them nationwide.

Why is new "hate crimes" legislation necessary? The ugly crimes in Texas and Wyoming that the President repeatedly cites were fully and (by international standards) harshly punished by the state courts. No victim group was slighted in the responses by state authorities. The shameless Clinton-Gore lamentations cannot obscure the fact that no state today takes such killings lightly.

We know Mr. Clinton is not a mature or serious man. Let him play with his usual political toys over the next year, but not with our federal criminal code. The dangers are too great.

—*Baltimore lawyer* **George Liebmann** *is a* TAE *contributing writer.*

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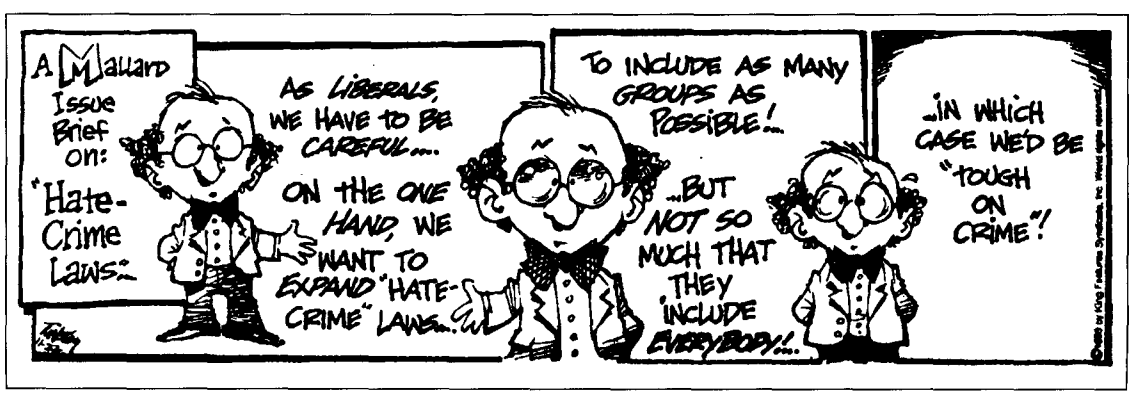

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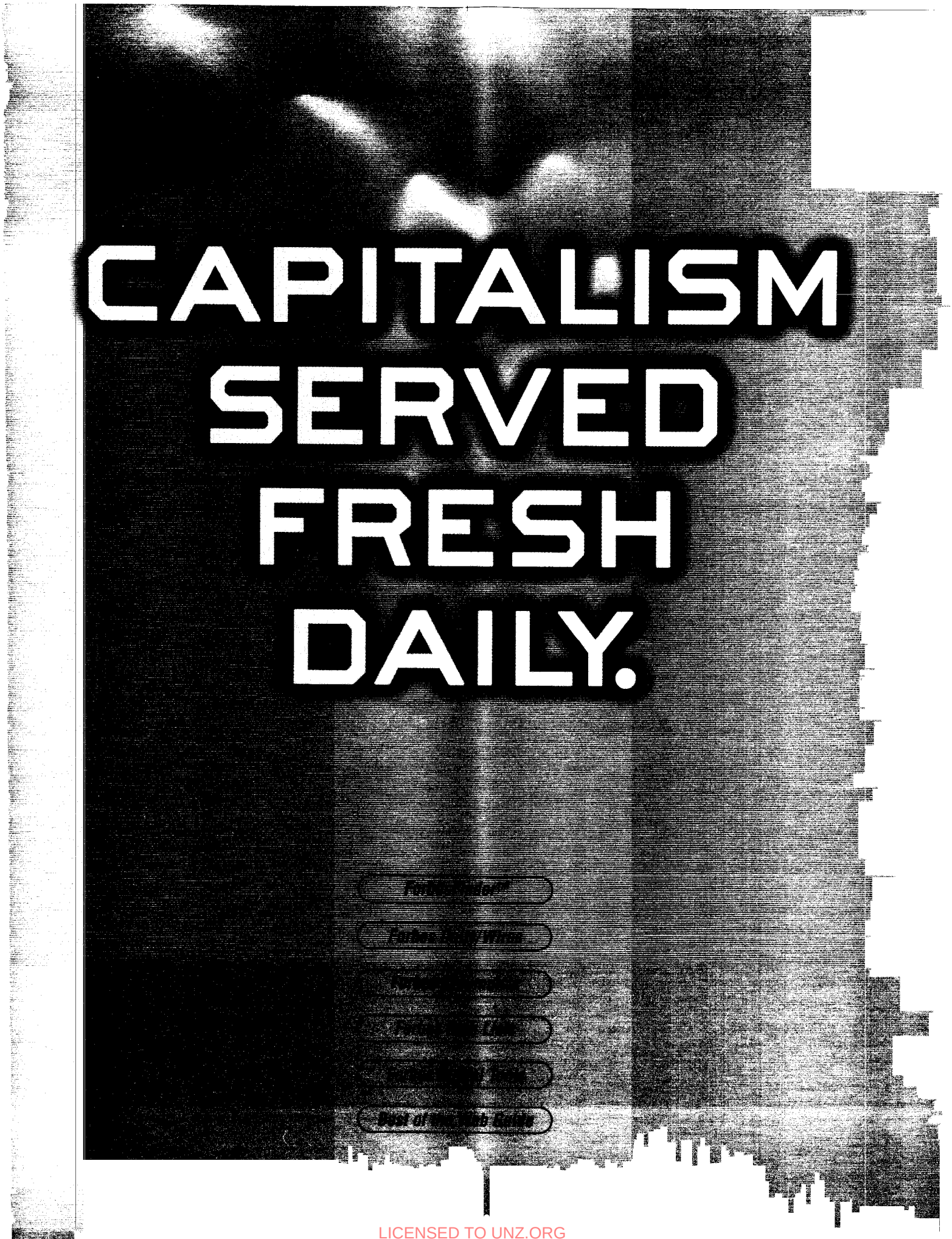

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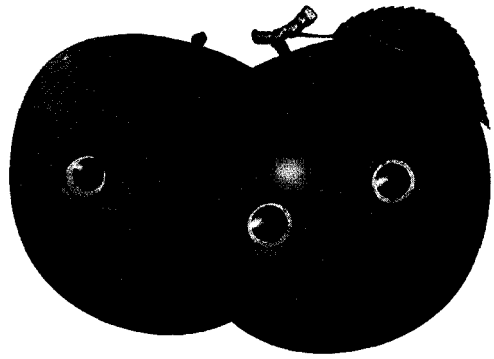
Forward Observer

JAMES GLASSMAN



The Right Campaign Issue: Education

Most presidential campaigns aren't very edifying. The current one threatens to be typical, with Vice President Al Gore attacking Texas Gov. George Bush on guns, abortion, and "risky tax cuts," and Bush trying to link Gore to campaign finance excesses and the character deficiencies of Bill Clinton.

But it doesn't have to be that way. The campaign could turn out to be the best in two decades if it concentrates on a single issue that clearly distinguishes the two candidates in principled and practical ways. That issue is education.

A CNN/*USA Today*/Gallup poll in early March found that Americans rank education as "the most important problem facing the country today"—far ahead of taxes, Medicare, Social Security, health care, and guns. It's the hottest public policy issue in Silicon Valley, where entrepreneurs despair of finding enough smart folks to staff their new companies. It's also the top worry of African Americans, who now support education vouchers 60 percent to 33 percent.

From a partisan perspective, I find it hard to see how Bush can win the election on any issue other than education. It's tough to run against an administration that has presided over the longest period of growth in U.S. history—whether Clinton and Gore really deserve the credit or not. If Bush is hoping for a recession, he can forget it.

The good news is that Bush seems to understand the power of the education issue. Shortly after he won the nomination, he began running TV ads pointing out that, "under Al Gore and Bill Clinton, national reading scores stagnated.... The achievement gap between poor and non-poor students remains wide. Gore and Clinton had eight years, but they've failed." Bush also highlights his own successes in Texas.

But he will have to do more. What truly divides the two candidates is that Bush believes the way to find solutions in education is through the same means the market uses to find solutions elsewhere. "Only the pressure of competition—and the power of parental choice—can change the status quo," he says.

Currently, 31 states plus the District of Columbia are operating a total of 1,682 charter schools (one-tenth of them in Texas). Charter schools are public schools established outside the conventional system, more and more by for-profit companies that operate without the restrictions unions impose.

Meanwhile, Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Florida have enacted voucher programs that let low-income parents or parents of children in failing schools get tax dollars to send their kids to private schools.

Bush's platform calls for "allowing federal funds to be used for public and private school choice," and for setting up a $3 billion fund of loan guarantees to help "establish or improve 2,000 charter schools nationwide in two years."

Gore's platform stresses technology: wiring schools to the Internet and improving teacher training in computers. He also wants to fund pre-school education for every child, to pay college students bonuses for becoming teachers, and to set up smaller "schools within schools."

Some of these ideas are fine, but, ultimately, Gore has a burden that prevents him from advocating real reform. He's allied with the powerful teachers' unions, and so can't support vouchers or even truly independent charter schools that would provide non-union competition—and thus, real innovation—to the established system. "We must reject the false promise of siphoning public school funding away to private schools," he said in a recent interview.

The irony here is practically unbearable. Gore himself is a graduate of St. Albans, a tony Washington prep school, and his kids attended private schools as well. As for "siphoning": What is a college Pell Grant if not a tuition voucher? Recipients can use such public grants at private universities ranging from Holy Cross to Brandeis.

There is a clear line dividing the education policies of the two candidates. Gore believes we can get better schools using a top-down command-and-control system. Come up with ideas like smaller classes and better testing, and use federal cash to get local schools to accept them.

Bush is saying—or *should* say: "We get better education the same way we get better computers—through competition. Let's end the worst monopoly this country has seen: state-run schools. It is a crime that so many kids, especially poor kids, are locked in schools that will never improve. Allow their parents more choice, and new schools will spring up to meet their needs. Then the old schools will reform themselves, or die."

This difference between Gore and Bush on schools mirrors their differences on other policies. The Democrat is an advocate of reform generated by smart bosses. The Republican says the only way to find solutions to many public-policy problems is through market competition and consumer choice.

Slug it out over education, guys, and this will be a great campaign—and, coincidentally, one that Bush could actually win.

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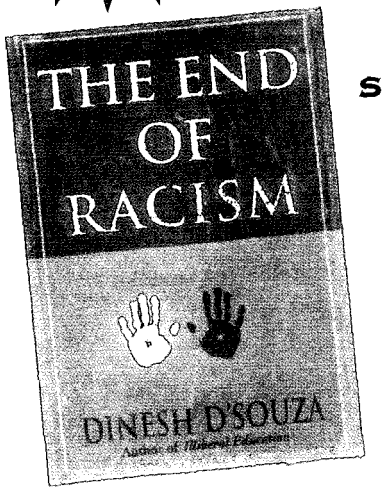

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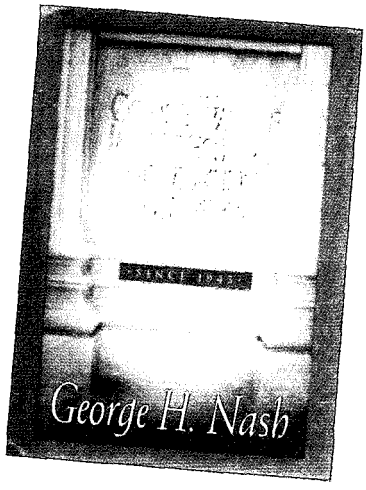

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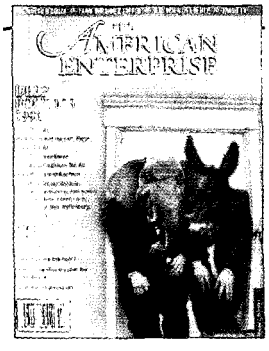

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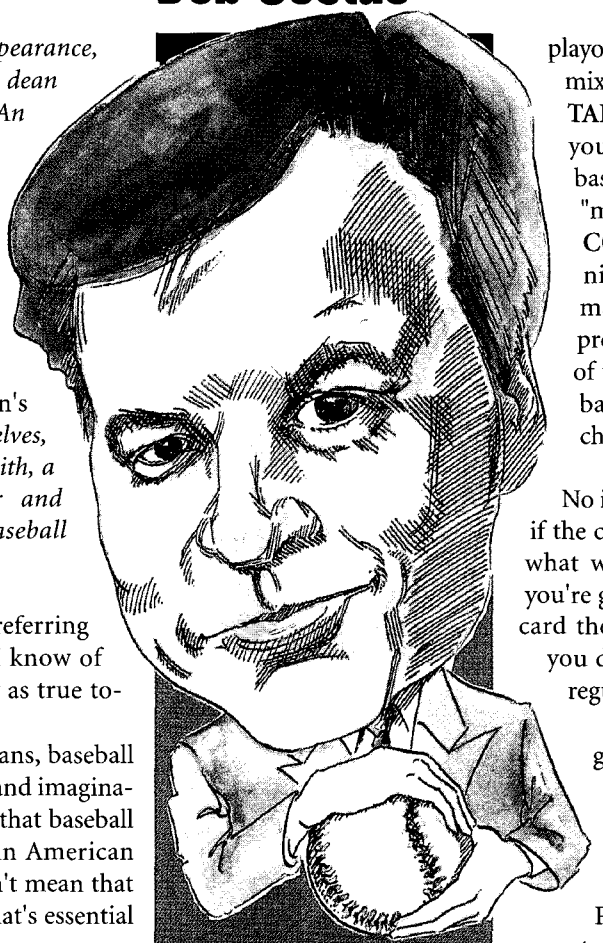
Bob Costas

*Despite his perennially boyish appearance, Bob Costas of NBC has become the dean of American sports broadcasters. An articulate traditionalist on baseball matters, he is a leading critic of the greed and gimmickry that have, for many young fans, reduced the national pastime to the status of tedious interlude between the NBA and NFL seasons. With a fresh major league season underway and his new book (*Fair Ball: A Fan's Case for Baseball*) on store shelves, Costas chatted with TAE's Curt Smith, a former presidential speechwriter and author of the classic study of baseball broadcasters,* Voices of the Game.



The great strength of baseball is its timelessness. The success of all the retro ballparks—throwbacks to old feelings—proves that.

TAE: Thomas Wolfe once wrote, referring to baseball, "Almost everything I know of spring is in it." That is not nearly as true today. Why?

COSTAS: For millions of Americans, baseball still has a real hold on their hearts and imagination, but it's unrealistic to assume that baseball is going to hold quite the place in American culture that it used to. That doesn't mean that it needs to surrender everything that's essential about it.

What disturbs me is that baseball in recent years has seemed to be panic-stricken, so intent on catching the shifting winds of pop culture that it's willing to distort the essence of the game.

Baseball's best bet is to accentuate the differences between it and other sports, and the greatest strength of baseball is its timelessness. Modern proof of that is the success of all the new retro ballparks: these throwbacks to old feelings are the closest thing to an unmitigated success that baseball has experienced over the last 10 years.

The results of other supposedly inspired changes—divisional realignments, expanded playoffs, the wild card, inter-league play—are mixed at best and disastrous at worst.

TAE: In *Fair Ball: A Fan's Case for Baseball*, you talk about the distinction—which baseball has failed to recognize—between "mere change and real progress."

COSTAS: Baseball has changed willy-nilly over the past several years and has managed, with the help of a compliant press, to frame the argument as a question of whether you're a progressive or a baseball conservative; whether you embrace change or you're resistant to change.

These are just mindless buzzwords. No intelligent person isn't willing to change if the change represents an improvement over what went before. But in baseball's case, if you're going to expand the playoffs, is the wild card the best way to do it—if in the process you destroy the meaning and drama of the regular season?

If you're going to play inter-league games, and I have no problem with that in concept, is it right to have the same divisions constantly match up against each other so that Mark McGwire and the Cardinals never come to Fenway Park? Derek Jeter and the Yankees never come to Cincinnati?

Or would it be better to rotate the inter-league games so that they felt more special? So that Ken Griffey, Jr., now in the National League, came to an American League city only once every three years; so that the games between the Yankees and Mets, instead of becoming annual affairs, were really something that was anticipated; so that the distinction between the leagues was maintained, but at the same time the novelty and appeal of inter-league games was also highlighted?

TAE: Does the record not show that when it comes to baseball, tradition sells?

COSTAS: Tradition does sell when it comes to baseball, and tradition should be respected in

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

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baseball more so than in other sports because it's an important part of baseball's appeal. Even when baseball modernizes, its best bet is to incorporate some element of timelessness, some element of baseball's historic appeal.

The reason I object to the label "traditionalist," though, is that in the present argument being called a traditionalist is akin to being labeled a member of the "Flat Earth Society."

I have no problem at all with baseball changing. Baseball has changed in the past, but not every change is progress. Take a couple of changes that occurred at roughly the same time.

In 1969, baseball, which had gone in the space of less than a decade from the 16 teams that it had for the better part of a century to 24 teams, decided it would split into two six-team divisions per league. So instead of a single pennant race, leading directly into the World Series, they went to Eastern and Western divisions in each league, and they played a league championship series at the conclusion of the regular season and then the World Series.

That was a practical and sensible change brought about by changing circumstances, and while it wasn't exactly the same as the baseball that had preceded it, it preserved the essence of the baseball everyone knew. Those divisional races felt like pennant races.

At about the same time, new ballparks cropped up all around baseball. Some of them were domed stadiums. All of the new parks had artificial turf. Does anybody, in retrospect, believe that was a good idea? It was progress. It certainly was modern. But it didn't improve baseball in any way.

TAE: What do you remember of George W. Bush when he was the owner of the Texas Rangers?

COSTAS: I didn't know Governor Bush that well, but I remember applauding when he was the only owner who voted against the wild card. Governor Bush recognized that this system would destroy pennant races, which are the lifeblood of baseball.

If you could guarantee me that George Bush's judgment on all policy issues would be as astute as his judgment was on the wild card, I would not only vote for him, I'd head his campaign.

TAE: The length of pro baseball and football games is in large part due to television time-outs. Is there any chance the networks would reduce the length of these time-outs?

COSTAS: Under the present circumstances, there's no chance of that because the rights fees are too high, and those funds have to be recouped somehow.

Making a lot of money and being well treated does not lead directly to improvement of a person's disposition. There are an awful lot of rich athletes who do nothing but complain.

On the other hand—and this may sound pie in the sky—but if baseball valued its own product enough to accept lower rights fees, so that they were able to play some World Series games in the daytime (which they should do just for the sake of the beauty and tradition), and if they were willing to contract the playoffs so that the games started earlier in October, then television would be willing to show fewer commercials.

There are other ways to shorten baseball games. Call the rule-book strike zone. Encourage pitchers not to dawdle with nobody on base, and batters not to step out of the batters' box after each and every pitch.

Every athlete in sports today has grown up watching television, and they've been conditioned by television to pose. And all this posing drags the game out.

TAE: Hispanics now dominate many baseball statistics, especially in the American League. How does the increased presence of non-English-speaking players affect baseball's mass appeal?

COSTAS: The more great players you bring to the game, the better. With baseball no longer reigning supreme as the unquestioned national pastime, and therefore losing a lot of great athletes, especially African-American athletes, to other team sports, you ought to go wherever you can find additional pools of talent: not just Latin America but increasingly now Asia. It's all to the good.

I can't imagine a baseball fan who doesn't think that baseball is all the better for every Pedro Martinez and Sammy Sosa it can find.

TAE: Who is the best baseball player that most of America has never heard of?

COSTAS: Rafael Palmiero is about as silent and underappreciated a Hall of Famer as you can imagine, especially given that he plays in the ESPN era, where highlights of every game are available constantly. Palmiero has put together numbers that dwarf those of many famous Hall of Famers of the past, but he's played in an era of great first basemen who put up enormous numbers, and he's never played in the World Series. He's been on the wrong teams at the wrong times, and he's never gotten center stage.

TAE: Which sport has the smartest players, the most sullen players, the funniest players?

COSTAS: As a group, baseball players are the funniest, because the nature of the sport is that not every game is life and death.

You play 162 games, you play virtually every day, and many of the players—the bench

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players, the starters who aren't working that day, the guys in the bullpen who won't be called upon until late in the game, the coaches whose basic job is to hit fungoes and say "Look alive out there"—those guys have time to let their minds wander to enjoy the atmosphere of the game, to swap stories, to give somebody a hot foot.

From what everybody tells me and from the little time I've spent around hockey players, they are actually the friendliest and the most cooperative.

I wouldn't want to label any group of athletes as the most sullen, but I will say this: Making a lot of money and being well treated does not lead directly to an improvement of people's dispositions.

Some of the most difficult and surly people are the people the world has treated the most kindly. There are an awful lot of rich people in sports who do nothing but complain.

TAE: In which sport do the players seem to be enjoying themselves most?

COSTAS: It's definitely not football because every game is war. It's too intense, too hyper. I really do think it's still baseball. Despite all the crassness and hype and greed and ego that may have diminished the game, at its core, it's a gentler game. A guy gets a base hit, arrives down at first base, his head is still in the game, but there's time to exchange pleasantries with the first baseman when he comes over to hold you on. "How's the wife and kids? I hear they might trade you to Baltimore. If you wind up there, say 'hi' to Cal for me."

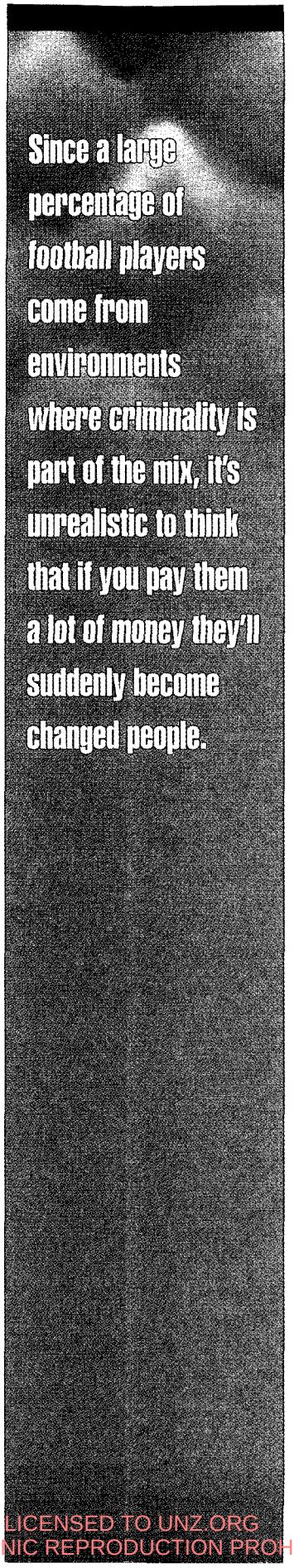
TAE: Hardly a week goes by without a new arrestee in the NFL. Given the aggressive nature of the sport, is this avoidable?

COSTAS: The nature of the sport is that it doesn't just tolerate, it *encourages* a certain kind of belligerent and even violent behavior. But I don't think that's the major factor.

The major factor here, and this has been cited by many observers, black and white, is that if a large percentage of your players come from environments where, for a variety of complex factors, criminality is part of the mix, it's unrealistic to think that if you pay them a lot of money they'll suddenly become changed people.

TAE: In city after city, owners threaten to move unless governments build them new stadiums. Is this is a legitimate use of taxpayer dollars?

COSTAS: Under the right conditions. It's legitimate if it's a public-private partnership, rather than just a grab of public funds by wealthy owners who are playing on the emotions of sports fans. And as long as stipulations are in place that say a certain percentage of the seats must, by law, be kept affordable. It's crazy to spend public funds on a ballpark that's going to be loaded with luxury boxes for high rollers, but where there aren't five-dollar tickets so the average guy can bring his family several times a year.



You wouldn't spend public funds on a library or a museum and then have an admission charge that effectively locked out a huge percentage of the populace.

Part of the appeal of sports, maybe baseball in particular, used to be that it was one of the few places where a cab driver was likely to find himself sitting next to a bank president. At present, that's not very likely to happen.

TAE: The colorful, swashbuckling, sometimes maddening individual owners—Jerry Jones, Marge Schott, Georgia Frontiere, Robert Irsay—are giving way to blandly non-controversial corporate ownership. Is this good or bad for sport?

COSTAS: Without approving of everything that some of the people you mentioned have ever done, I think part of the appeal of sports always has been colorful characters. Increasingly, because of the economics of sports, franchises are being acquired either by corporations or by fabulously wealthy individuals who have no real ongoing commitment to the sport. Their reason for owning the team may not be, first and foremost, a love of and understanding of the game, and a commitment to its well-being. There is a movement in the direction of a more soulless state of affairs.

The Calvin Griffiths and George Steinbrenners of the world may not be perfect, but they're baseball men in a way that Rupert Murdoch is not.

TAE: This year's Super Bowl featured two recently relocated teams, the St. Louis Rams and Tennessee Titans. Do franchise moves hurt sports, or does it depend on whose ox is gored?

COSTAS: From the standpoint of local fans, it always depends on whose ox is gored. That's why Baltimore Colts fans wept, and rightly so, when Robert Irsay took their team to Indianapolis, but they thought it was just dandy when the Cleveland Browns, part of the heart and soul and identity of Cleveland, moved to Baltimore and became the Ravens. They greeted them with open arms.

But if you look at it fairly, the only times when franchise moves are truly justified is when there's a demonstrated pattern of non-support

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by fans, even though the management may be competent. Or if you go back to the earlier days, especially in baseball, when all the teams were in the Central and Eastern time zones, it made sense for the sport to expand west. In some cases there were two teams in a single city: it certainly made sense for the Boston Braves to move out of Boston. It may make sense even now for the Oakland A's to move because the Bay Area can't support two teams.

But when you're simply looking to extort a greater amount of money by playing one city off against another, it's difficult to look approvingly on that.

TAE: Give me your take on John Rocker and the response to his comments. Was it proportionate or a case of piling on?

COSTAS: The response was disproportionate. I wouldn't want to spend a second defending Rocker. He strikes me as an idiot. His comments deserve booing from fans, maybe a punch in the nose from a teammate in the clubhouse, or the cold shoulder all around the league.

On the other hand, when you consider the real importance of the remarks of one young knucklehead who has nothing to do with baseball policymaking alongside real policy questions, like baseball's history of minority hiring, the Rocker thing became an issue out of all proportion to its real importance.

TAE: Did you object to Jim Gray's interview of Pete Rose last year?

COSTAS: It's pretty clear even to those of us who admired many aspects of Pete Rose's career that Pete Rose did bet on baseball. Pete deserved to be banned from baseball, at least for a period of time.

He made his own situation worse by not being contrite, by being defiant about the whole thing. Probably if he had swallowed his pride and accepted some kind of punishment short of permanent ineligibility, he'd be back in the game right now.

So everything that Jim Gray asked Pete Rose was legitimate. I've asked him many of the same questions in other places. And if Jim had posed those questions on the "Today" show, he probably would have been applauded for a tough journalistic approach.

The reason why this one struck the wrong chord with so many people was that it happened in the immediate aftermath of a heartwarming ceremony, not just involving Pete but involving Ted Williams, Willie Mays, Stan Musial, Sandy Koufax, all these other all-time greats, and the viewers felt that this kind of confrontation was not appropriate in the immediate aftermath of a baseball celebration.

If you could guarantee George W. Bush's judgment on all policy issues would be as astute as his judgment on the decision to begin a wild card playoff in baseball, I'd lead his campaign.

TAE: Do you draw a distinction between whether Rose should be be banned from the game and whether he should be eligible for the Hall of Fame?

COSTAS: I think he should be eligible for the Hall of Fame. He got those 4,200-plus basehits before gambling became an issue, and I think justice would be tempered by mercy if Pete Rose were to be placed on the ballot. Some writers might very well lodge a protest by not voting him in the first year, but eventually he would get in, and at the bottom of his plaque, along with all his baseball achievements, it should read, "Banned from baseball for gambling, 1989."

TAE: What's happened to American popular culture today?

COSTAS: I'm stunned by how rapidly the culture has been coarsened, not just by vulgarity and tastelessness but by mean-spiritedness.

Profanity is used indiscriminately. I don't see how it can possibly shock or provide emphasis anymore because it's so commonplace. People have been numbed by it.

Look at the success of the WWF. Wrestling may have been lowbrow in the past, but it was good-natured melodrama with characters and a wink. Now it's ultra-violent, profane, anti-woman, with every gross ethnic, racial, and religious stereotype you can think of. Every extreme profanity—and it's directed at young kids.

TAE: Are professional sports just entertainment, or do they have any ability to teach lessons which can make spectators better citizens?

COSTAS: Sports has always been entertainment. It's always been a business. But there was a time when the game itself had some value. I guess it still can, but it's pretty hard to find the pearl in the oyster.

People are foolish if they look to sports for their life lessons or if they look to sports for their role model. If you get a Cal Ripken, a Tony Gwynn, a Grant Hill, that's a bonus, but that shouldn't be the first place you look.

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Victims of Androgyny

How Feminist Schooling Harms Boys

By Christina Hoff Sommers

My 14-year-old son, David, sometimes shows signs of the kind of emotional disengagement that worries feminists who would like to "reform" boys. He came to me one evening when he was in the seventh grade, utterly confused by his homework assignment. Like many contemporary English and social studies textbooks, his book, *Write Source 2000*, was chock- full of exercises designed to improve children's self-esteem and draw them out emotionally. "Mom, what do they want?" David asked.

He had read a short story in which one character always compared himself to another. Here are the questions David had to answer: Do you often compare yourself with someone? Do you compare to make yourself feel better? Does your comparison ever make you feel inferior?

The *Write Source 2000 Teacher's Guide* suggests grading students on a scale from one to ten: Ten for a student who is "intensely engaged," down to one for a student who "does not engage at all." David did not engage at all:

- Do you often compare yourself with someone else? "Sometimes."
- Do you compare to make yourself feel better? "No. I do not."
- Do your comparisons make you feel inferior? "No."

I was amused by his terse replies. But feminists see them as unhealthy signs of emotional shutdown.

Toy manufacturers know about boys' reluctance to engage in social interactions. They have never been able to interest boys in the kinds of interactive social games girls love. In the computer game "Talk With Me Barbie," Barbie develops a personal relationship with the player: She learns her name and chats with her about dating, careers, and playing house. These Barbie games are among the all-time best-selling interactive games. But boys don't buy them.

Males, whether young or old, are just less interested than females in talking about personal feelings and relationships. In

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Being a boy is not a defect in need of a cure. Why do liberal gender theorists see masculinity as politically incorrect, something to be overcome?

one experiment, researchers at Northeastern University analyzed college students' conversations at the cafeteria table. They found young women were far more likely to discuss intimates: close friends, boyfriends, family members. "Specifically," say the authors, "56 percent of the women's targets but only 25 percent of the men's targets were friends and relatives." This is just one study, but it is backed up by massive evidence of distinct male and female interests and preferences. In another study, boys and girls differed in how they perceived objects and people. Researchers simultaneously presented male and female college students with two images on a stereoscope: one of an object, the other of a person. Asked to say what they saw, the male subjects saw the object more often than they saw the person; the female subjects saw the person more often than they saw the object. In addition, dozens of experiments confirm that women are much better than men at judging emotions based on the expression on a stranger's face.

If, as the evidence strongly suggests, the characteristically different interests, preferences, and behaviors of males and females are expressions of innate, "hardwired" biological differences, then their differences in emotional styles will be difficult or impossible to eliminate. But why should anyone make it his business to eliminate them? Why do liberal gender theorists see male stoicism and reserve as vices or psychological weaknesses to be overcome?

In most cultures—including our own until quite recently—reticence and stoicism have been regarded as commendable, while free expression of emotions is often seen as a shortcoming. From a historical perspective, the burden of proof rests on those who believe that being openly expressive makes people better and healthier.

Dr. William Pollack, author of *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*, is a champion of emotional expressiveness. He instructs parents, "Let boys know that they don't need to be 'sturdy oaks,'" for to encourage boys to be stoical is to "harm" them. But Pollack needs to show, not merely assert, that it harms a child to be "called upon to be tough." All of the world's major religions place stoical control of emotions at the center of their moral teachings. "Be in touch with your feelings" is not one of the Ten Commandments. Judeo-Christian teaching enjoins attentiveness to the emotional needs and feelings of others—not one's own.

Reform-minded "experts" should seriously consider the possibility that American children may in fact need more, not less, self-control and less, not more, self-involvement. It may be that American boys don't need to be more emotional and that American girls do need to be less sentimental and self-absorbed. (Maybe all the crashing and disappearing selves of young women described in books like Mary Pipher's *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls* are selves that have for too long been self-preoccupied, to the unhealthy exclusion of outside interests.)

Contrary to what many feminists argue today, American boys are not deformed by society's conditioning. They do not need to be rescued. They are not pathological. They are not seething with repressed sentiments or imprisoned in "straitjackets" of masculinity. Being a boy is not a defect in need of a cure.

Indeed, when it comes to the genuine problems that do threaten our children's prospects—their moral drift, their academic deficits—the androgynizers, healers, and social reformers provide no solutions. On the contrary, they exacerbate the problems and stand squarely in the way of what needs to be done to solve them, as one can see by looking at today's classrooms.

Consider the case of Mrs. Daugherty, a retired Chicago public school teacher whose story is famous in education circles. She was a highly respected sixth-grade teacher. One year she found her class impossible to control and began to worry that many of them had serious learning disabilities. When the principal was away, she did something teachers were not supposed to do: She looked in a special file where students' I.Q.s were recorded. To her amazement, she found that a majority of her students were way above average in intelligence, many with I.Q.s in the 120s and 130s. One of the worst classroom culprits was brilliant: He had an I.Q. of 145.

Mrs. Daugherty was angry at herself. She had been feeling sorry for the children, giving them remedial work, and expecting little from them. She immediately brought in challenging work, increased homework, and inflicted draconian punishments on misbehavior. Slowly the students' performance improved. By year's end, the class of ne'er-do-wells was one of the best behaved and highest performing in the sixth grade.

The principal was delighted by the turnaround. At the end of the year, he asked Mrs. Daugherty what she had done; she told him the truth. He forgave her and congratulated her. But then he added, "I think you should know, Mrs. Daugherty, those numbers next to the children's names—those are not their I.Q. scores. Those are their locker numbers."

The moral is clear: Strict is good. Demanding excellence and good conduct only benefits the student. Sadly, a lot of education specialists are skeptical of this uncontroversial truism. The shift away from structured classrooms, competition, strict discipline, and skill-and-fact-based learning has been harmful to all children—especially boys.

Progressive pedagogues pride themselves on fostering creativity and enhancing children's self-esteem. A recent summary of our educational establishment's view of what schools need most today listed the following items:

"LESS student passivity: sitting, listening, receiving, and absorbing information"…

"LESS rote memorization of facts and details"…

"LESS emphasis on competition and grades in school"…

Christina Hoff Sommers is a W. H. Brady Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. This article is adapted from her forthcoming book, The War Against Boys.

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> Boys are paying the highest price for the current misguided fashions in education, especially the denigration of competition.

"MORE active learning in the classroom with all the attendant noise and movement of students doing, talking, and collaborating"...

"MORE cooperative, collaborative activity; developing the classroom as an interdependent community"

Meanwhile, in Britain—where, as in America, boys are markedly behind girls academically, especially in reading and writing—education officials have found that this sort of "progressive" approach especially disadvantages boys. A council of British headmasters spent almost a decade studying successful classroom programs for male students, and found that nearly everything on their list violates some hallowed progressive tenet. A selection of the practices they found most effective with boys:

More teacher-led work
A structured environment
High expectations
Strict homework checks
Consistently applied sanctions if work is not done
Greater emphasis on silent work
Frequent testing
One-sex classes

The headmasters advise schools to avoid fanciful, "creative" assignments, noting, "Boys do not always see the intrinsic worth of 'Imagine you're a sock in a dustbin.' They want relevant work." Nor are the headmasters concerned about the students' self-esteem. And they do not celebrate collaborative learning.

One approach now being experimented with in co-ed public schools throughout Great Britain is all-male classes. In 1996, Ray Bradbury, the head teacher of King's School in Winchester, was alarmed by the high failure rates of his boys, which far exceeded those of his female students. He identified 30 or so boys he thought at risk for failure and placed them together in a class. He chose an athletic young male teacher he thought the boys would like. The class was not "child-centered." The pedagogy was strict and old-fashioned. "The class is didactic and teacher-fronted," he explained. "It involves sharp questions and answers, and constantly checking understanding. Discipline is clear-cut—if homework isn't presented, it is completed in a detention. There is no discussion."

A visiting journalist described the class: "Ranks of boys in blazers face the front, giving full attention to the young teacher's instructions. His style is uncompromising and inspirational. 'People think that boys like you won't be able to understand writers such as the Romantic poets. Well, you're going to prove them wrong. Do you understand?'"

"When girls are present," the teacher explains, "boys are loath to express opinions for fear of appearing sissy." He chooses challenging but male-appropriate readings: "Members of my group are football mad and quite 'laddish.' In the mixed classes they would be turned off by *Jane Eyre*, whereas I can pick texts such as *Silas Marner* and The War Poets." The initial results have been promising. By 1997, after only a year, the boys had nearly closed the gap with the girls.

Another vindication of traditional pedagogy: In fall 1998, the British government introduced into primary schools a compulsory back-to-basics program called the "Literacy Hour," explicitly intended to narrow the achievement gap between boys and girls. It is phonics-centered, whole-class, teacher-led, with old-fashioned emphasis on such things as grammar and punctuation. David Blunkett, Britain's Education Secretary, also insisted that teachers find boy-friendly reading materials such as adventure, sports, or horror stories as well as nonfiction.

The effects were immediate and dramatic. In fall 1999, British newspapers announced the good tidings. In the words of the *Daily Mail*:

> While the girls are still ahead, the ability gap has dramatically narrowed. Education Secretary David Blunkett will see the...results as complete vindication of his back-to-basics policies in primary schools.... Last year just 64 percent of 11-year-old boys were proficient in reading. Today's figure is 78 percent. The remarkable improvement has exceeded the wildest expectation of the government.

The British experience suggests boys respond well to the traditional ways of teaching. If so, boys are paying the highest price for the current misguided fashions in education, especially the denigration of competition. Janet Daley, education writer for London's *Daily Telegraph*, observes that "by rejecting the old-fashioned ladder of tests, measurable achievement, and competition, incentives were lost that had once given school a comprehensible point to many pupils—particularly the male ones." A world "in which no one can be called a winner and nothing counts as losing will have little call on the young male psyche."

Unfortunately, the elimination of competitive rankings in American schools has made great headway. Pat Riordan of George Mason University researched class rankings for the National Association of Secondary Schools. She estimates that 60 percent of schools no longer use them. At Community High in Ann Arbor, Michigan, for instance, academic awards at graduation are kept a secret. As the graduation counselor puts it, "Everybody is seen as an equal contributor to the class of '99." Jim Mitchell, executive director of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals, explains the new hostility to the honor roll: "It flies in the face of the philosophy of not making it so competitive for those little kids.... We even frown on spelling bees."

Yet competition that provides incentives to excel is as natural to a successful classroom as it is to a successful sports team. E. D. Hirsch, an educator and reformer at the University of Virginia, advises that "instead of trying fruitlessly to abolish competition as an element of human nature, we

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should try to guide it into educationally productive channels."

As soon as they identified the education gender gap, British educators began seriously experimenting with same-sex classes as a way of narrowing it, despite the rancorous reaction from "progressives" that such classes produce. Acknowledging that single-sex schooling is unorthodox, Marian Cox, headmistress at the Cotswold School, argues that "We have a national crisis with boys' under-achievement in English. Either we tackle it, or we just put our heads in the sand."

Sadly, any time American schools try to develop special programs for boys, groups such as NOW and the ACLU vociferously oppose them.

Sadly, any time American schools try to develop special programs for boys, groups such as the National Organization for Women and the American Civil Liberties Union vociferously oppose them. This despite the example of schools like Harford Heights Elementary School, Maryland's largest elementary school, located in a poor Baltimore neighborhood. Since the mid-1990s, the school has experimented with same-sex classes for boys and girls. They are optional; parents and teachers jointly decide who will most benefit.

As in Great Britain, the all-boy classes are taught by male teachers, and the boys' natural competitiveness and high-spiritedness are not discouraged but channeled to good ends. As the former principal, who initiated the program, said, "The boys become competitive rather than combative."

Walter Sallee has taught an all-boys class for three years at Harford, using many of the old-fashioned methods favored by the British headmasters. He teaches phonics, grammar, and diction. He carefully monitors progress. He uses boy-friendly materials; for example, he has developed math lessons based on Jackie Robinson's baseball statistics, and they have proved a great success. At recess his focus is character education through sportsmanship.

He exploits the boys' natural competitiveness by breaking his class of ten-year-olds into "teams." Classroom activities become contests with an elaborate point system and prizes. School uniforms are optional at Harford, but most of his boys choose to wear them. Teams get extra points when all members don the uniform.

His boys are mostly poor and African American. Sallee is concerned about their self-esteem and confidence, but he does not rely on therapeutic methods. The boys gain confidence by mastering skills, becoming good sports, being team players and young gentlemen. One of his primary aims is helping them develop social skills. They learn to express themselves with confidence, and they learn manners. Several times a year the all-boy and all-girl classes take part in shared events. One favorite occasion is a Thanksgiving banquet in which the boys escort the girls to the table, help them into their chairs, and engage in polite conversation. The children love it—especially the girls.

Though at risk for every kind of academic and behavioral problem, the boys in Sallee's class are the opposite of disengaged and disruptive. They are enthralled. As Sallee told me, "They love the positive attention they get.... They look forward to it and hate to miss a single day." Harford Heights offers same-sex classes in grades three, four, and five. The classes are a great success with parents, who are asking for more. It is easy to see why. Sallee's deliberate efforts to teach ethics through sportsmanship and good manners could be the making of many boys, rich and poor, from all ethnic backgrounds. But the forces arrayed against public, same-sex education for boys are formidable.

In 1998, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) released *Separated by Sex: A Critical Look at Single-Sex Education for Girls*. The report, a compilation of essays by several scholars, turned out to be inconclusive. Most of the authors agreed more systematic long-term research was needed. But the AAUW press release was categorically negative: "What the report shows is that separating by sex is not the solution to the gender inequity in education." Critics soon pointed out the disparity between the full report and the press summary. One of the contributing scholars, Cornelius Riordan, was stunned. He told the *Los Angeles Times* that the press releases were "slanted," and "off the deep end."

Co-education is a strong tradition in the United States, and it's doubtful we will ever adopt a single-sex system on a large scale. On the other hand, those who oppose it on ideological grounds should not be indulged. Single-sex classes seem to be working for privileged boys who attend private schools as well as for the disadvantaged boys in Mr. Sallee's class. British officials believe in them. We need a national discussion of the merits of all-male classes without ideological interference.

In 1970, Theodore Sizer, then dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, co-edited with his wife, Nancy, a collection of ethics lectures entitled *Moral Education*. The preface sets the tone by condemning the morality of the "Christian gentleman," the American "prairie," the McGuffey Readers, and any grading system that inspires "terror" in the young. The Sizers were especially critical of the "crude and philosophically simpleminded sermonizing" tradition of the nineteenth century. That kind of morality "can and should be scrapped," argued the Sizers.

Instead they favored a "new morality" that gives primacy to students' autonomy and independence. Teachers should never preach or inculcate virtue; rather, through their actions they should demonstrate a "fierce commitment" to social justice. In part, that means democratizing the classroom: "Teacher and children can learn about morality from each other."

On top of new relativistic theories of education like this one, schoolhouse moral standards and discipline were severely damaged in recent decades by court verdicts that eroded the standard-setting power of teachers and school officials. In 1969, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Iowa school authorities had violated students' rights by denying them permission to wear protest armbands to school. Justice Abe Fortas, in the

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majority opinion, found the action of the school authorities unconstitutional: "It can hardly be argued that students shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate."

Justice Hugo Black dissented. Though a great champion of First Amendment rights, Black pointed out that school children "need to learn, not teach." He wrote, presciently, "It is the beginning of a new revolutionary era of permissiveness in this country fostered by the Judiciary…turned loose with lawsuits for damages and injunctions against their teachers.... It is nothing but wishful thinking to imagine that young, immature students will not soon believe it is their right to control the schools."

Indeed, teachers and parents who embraced the "liberate the children" view turned out to have badly underestimated the potential barbarism of children who are not given a directed moral education. That the romantic approach to moral education is harmful is becoming increasingly obvious to the public, but it will take some time for the educational establishment to change.

It's unlikely a single ethics class would have, for instance, stopped boys like Harris and Klebold from murdering their classmates at Columbine High School. On the other hand, a K-12 curriculum infused with moral content would have created a climate that might have made a massacre unthinkable. Such a depraved and immoral act *was* indeed unthinkable in the "simpleminded" days before the schools cast aside their mission of moral edification.

Teachers, too, would have acted differently. Had K-12 teachers in the Littleton schools seen it as their duty to civilize the students in their care, they would never have overlooked the bizarre, antisocial behavior of Klebold and Harris. When the boys appeared in school with T-shirts emblazoned "Serial Killer," their teachers would have sent them home. Nor would the boys have been allowed to wear swastikas or produce grossly violent videos as school projects. By tolerating these modes of "self-expression," the adults at Columbine implicitly sent students the message that there's not much wrong with the murder of innocent people.

> When it comes to the genuine problems that do threaten our children's prospects—their moral drift, their academic deficits—the androgynizers and liberal social reformers stand in the way.

One English teacher at Columbine, Cheryl Lucas, told *Education Week* that both boys had written short stories about death and killing "that were horribly, graphically violent" and that she had notified school officials. According to Lucas, the officials had taken no action because nothing the boys wrote had violated school policy. Speaking with painful irony, the frustrated teacher explained, "In a free society, you can't take action until they've committed some horrific crime because they are guaranteed freedom of speech." In many high schools, students are confident that their right to say and do almost anything will be indulged. Counselors and administrators rarely take action, out of fear they will be challenged by litigious parents backed by the ACLU and other zealous guardians of students' rights.

Incidents such as the Columbine shootings have led Americans to begin to take a hard look at boys and their growing educational lags. This is encouraging, for the public has a lot to learn about how our schools have been routinely failing boys, both academically and morally. But if our schools are to be gotten back on track, something akin to a "Great Relearning" will have to take place regarding the true natures of boys and girls, men and women.

I borrow the phrase "Great Relearning" from the novelist Tom Wolfe, who applied it to lessons learned in the late 1960s by

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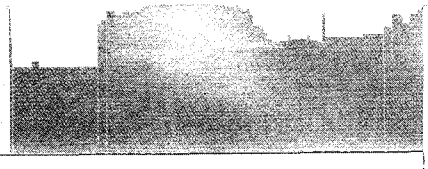

a group of hippies living in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. The hippies had collectively decided that hygiene was a middle-class hang-up they would live without. Baths and showers, while not actually banned, were frowned upon as retrograde. These men and women "sought nothing less than to sweep aside all codes and restraints of the past and start out at zero," noted Wolfe.

But after a while, their principled aversion to modern hygiene had unpleasant consequences: "At the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic there were doctors treating diseases no living doctor had ever encountered before, diseases that had disappeared so long ago they had never even picked up Latin names, diseases such as the mange, the grunge, the itch, the twitch, the thrush, the scroff, the rot." Their manginess eventually began to vex the reformers, leading them to individually seek help. They had gone too far in jettisoning proven social practices and plain common sense. Step by step, they had to rediscover for themselves the rudiments of modern hygiene. A Great Relearning.

Far outside of Haight-Ashbury, other Americans have jettisoned older mores and morals in hopes that, starting from zero, they would arrive at a society more just and free. The new amorality is most dramatically seen in our children. By recklessly denying the importance of giving the young moral guidance, parents and educators have cast great numbers of them adrift. In some ways, we are as down and out as those poor hippies who finally found themselves knocking at the door of the clinic. We too face a Great Relearning.

One area where we have much to relearn concerns the plain facts about males and females. We are going to have to get away from the idea that boys and girls are the same, and that such differences as we find are the result of social conditioning imposed by a patriarchal male culture intent on subjugating women. We must relearn what previous generations never doubted: Boys and girls are different in ways that go far beyond the obvious biological divergences.

A recent book, *Between Mothers and Sons*, offers poignant glimpses of several mothers rediscovering the true nature of boys. Most of the contributors to this collection of mother-son reflections are self-described feminists, and it is a compilation of wistful insights from mothers who have had to call into question their cherished prejudices about boys when they turned out not to square with their own experience as mothers.

Some of the mothers confess to having tried to educate their sons in conformity with feminist precepts, stopping only when it became evident that they were coercing their sons to act against their natures. In these accounts, Mother Nature, not social conditioning, has the last word, and fashionable ideology is swept away by the powerful love that mothers—including committed feminist mothers—bear for their sons.

Deborah Galyan, a short-story writer and essayist, describes what happened when she sent her son Dylan to a Montessori preschool "run by a goddess-worshipping, multiracial women's collective on Cape Cod":

> Something about it did not honor his boy soul. I think it was the absence of physical competition. Boys who clashed or tussled with each other were separated and counseled by the peacemakers. Sticks were confiscated and turned into tomato stakes in the school garden.... [I]t finally came to me...I had sent him there to protect him from the very circuitry and compulsions and desires that make him what he is. I had sent him there to protect him from himself.

Teachers and parents who embraced the "liberate the children" view badly underestimated the potential barbarism of youngsters who are not given a directed moral education.

Galyan then posed painful questions to which she found a liberating answer: "How could I be a good feminist, a good pacifist, and a good mother to a stick-wielding, weapon-generating boy?" Answer: "A five-year-old boy, I learned from reading summaries of various neurological studies...is a beautiful, fierce, testosterone drenched, cerebrally asymmetrical humanoid carefully engineered to move objects through space, or at the very least, to watch others do so."

Janet Burroway, a poet, novelist, and self-described pacifist-liberal, has a son Tim, who grew up to become a career soldier. She is not sure how exactly he came to move in a direction opposite her own. She recalls his abiding fascination with plastic planes, toy soldiers, and military history, noting that "his direction was early set." Tim takes her aback in many ways, but she is clearly proud of him. Throughout his childhood she was struck by his "chivalric character": "He would, literally, lay down his life for a cause or a friend." And she confesses, "I am forced to be aware of my own contradictions in his presence: a feminist often charmed by his machismo."

As part of our Great Relearning, we must again recognize and respect the reality that boys and girls are different, that each sex has its distinctive strengths and graces. We must put an end to all the crisis mongering that pathologizes children. We must be less credulous when sensationalist "experts" talk of girls as drowning Ophelias or of boys as anxious, isolated Hamlets. Neither sex needs to be "revived" or "rescued"; neither needs to be "regendered." Instead of doing things that do not need doing and should not be done, we must dedicate ourselves to the hard tasks that are both necessary and possible: improving the moral climate in our schools and providing our children with first-rate education that equips them for a good life in the new century.

I am confident we can do that. American boys, whose very masculinity turns out to be politically incorrect, badly need our support. If you are an optimist, as I am, you believe that good sense and fair play will prevail. If you are a mother of sons, as I am, you know that one of the more agreeable facts of life is that boys will be boys.

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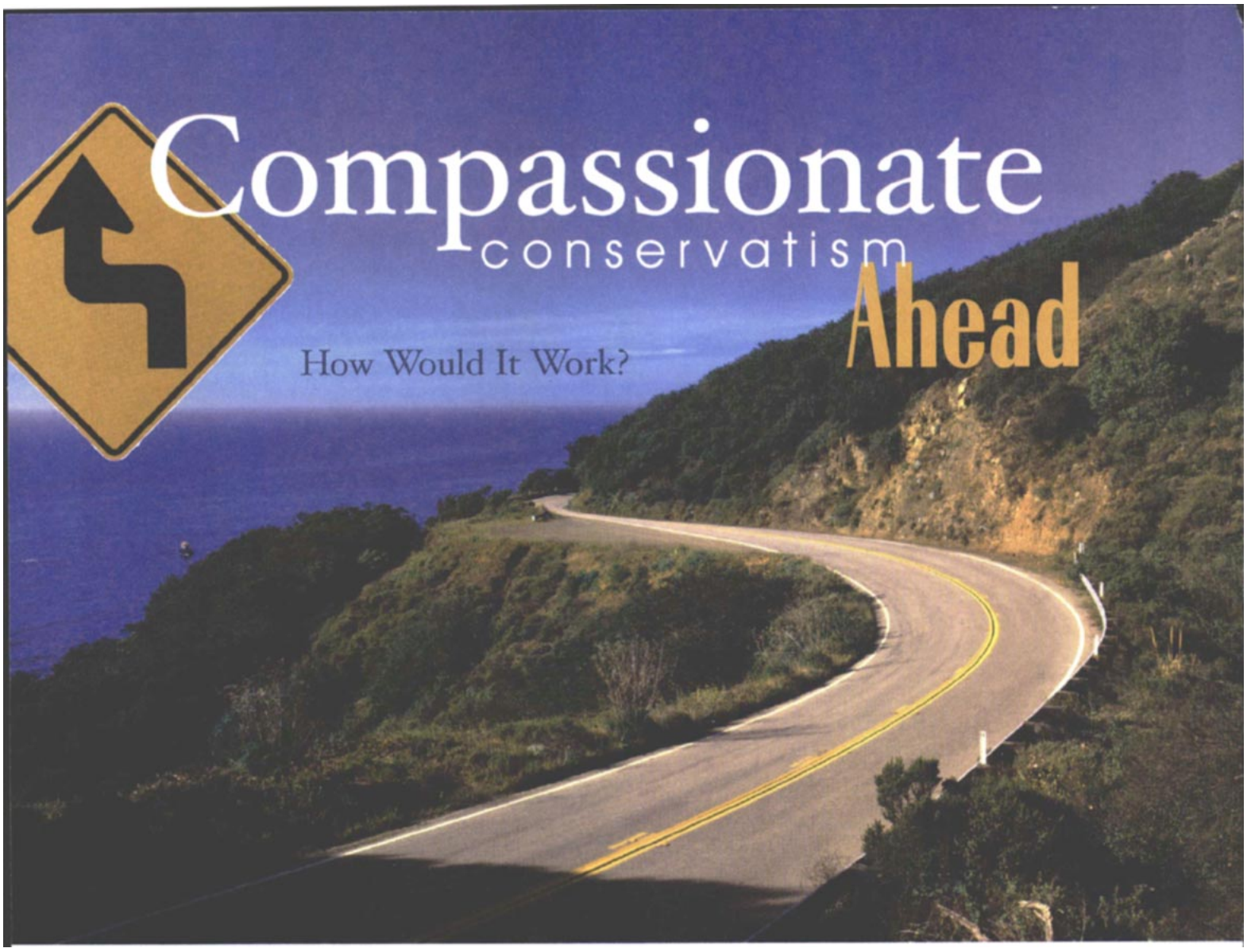

Bush vs. Gore on Faith-based Charity

By Joe Loconte

What exactly, Americans wonder, does George W. Bush mean when he says his presidential campaign is founded on something called "compassionate conservatism"?

In an important speech last year, Governor Bush chided those who simply want governmental social programs scaled back while remaining indifferent to the fate of American individuals and communities who are failing. Some of America's most effective healers of social disorder and personal trauma, he notes, are churches and religious charitable organizations. But "it is not enough to call for voluntarism," he says. As an alternative to the bureaucratic welfare state, "more support and resources—both public and private" must be channeled to private charities, secular and religious.

Bush was the first governor to endorse the "Charitable Choice" provisions of the 1996 welfare reform law—those landmark new rules that permit churches and other religious organizations serving the poor to be eligible for government anti-poverty funds without having to purge themselves of their religious character. He has also made Charitable Choice the template, via executive order, for other efforts to attack social problems through the mechanism of faith-based charities.

Governor Bush's campaign proposals for encouraging private and religious charitable work include at least $8 billion in new tax incentives for charitable giving to groups that help the poor; block grants for maternity homes for unwed mothers, available to a range of community groups including churches; mentoring programs for the children of prison inmates; a green light for faith-based programs in four federal prisons. Bush would also open all federal after-school programs to competitive bidding, giving religious groups equal access to at-risk students. "We will allow private and religious groups to compete to provide services in every federal, state, and local social program," he says. "Wherever we can, we must expand their role and reach."

The governor's record has two driving principles: circumvent needless regulations while recruiting private and religious groups as equal partners with government agencies. In 1996, Bush ordered the Texas Department of Human Services to write Charitable Choice protections into all its contracts. These protections, as first spelled out in the '96 welfare reform bill, explicitly allow religious groups to compete for federal funds without having to first purge the faith content from their

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programs, whether that involves Bible-based concepts or the presence of religious symbols like crucifixes. There are also provisions that protect religion-based employment decisions, one of the next great church-state battlegrounds.

In addition to putting these federal principles into effect across his state, Governor Bush extended Charitable Choice provisions into entirely new areas—to cover grants for abstinence programs, for example. In 1997, Bush signed legislation that deregulated religious drug treatment programs and allowed private accreditation for child-care centers, many of which are church-based. Last year he earmarked $7 million in competitive grants for faith-based groups and created a full-time liaison to help ensure they get the money.

The results have been modest, yet important in redefining the role of government versus the private sector. The state's Pathfinders project, for example, has connected 605 welfare recipients with mentors from community organizations, most of them churches. In Tarrant County (Fort Worth), 33 congregations provide volunteers and support services. "It's been us on the government end who have held back in involving churches," says Debby Kratky, who runs the county's welfare-to-work program. "But the hardest-to-serve clients don't respond well to government organizations."

AP/Wide World Photos

Bush's readiness to marshal federal money and protections for religious groups would mean a reinventing of government unimaginable to his Democratic rival Al Gore. For this is not government by proxy. We're not "enlisting their help to merely duplicate the weaknesses of government-style aid," explains Don Willett, Bush's special projects director. "We are trying to create a safe harbor for explicitly religious programs."

Bush expects religious groups to introduce needy people to faith as part of their caregiving. For it is faith, he argues, that produces deep changes in character. "The power of the church is its capacity to change the heart," he told *Christianity Today*, "and we should not force the church to change its mission." That is why, for example, Bush helped Prison Fellowship ministries set up the nation's first Christian prison inside a state facility. The InnerChange program at Jester II prison in Sugarland, involving more than half the inmate population, makes Christian conversion an explicit goal.

The Supreme Court has ruled that charitable groups cannot use public funds to teach religion. But Stephen Goldsmith, former Indianapolis mayor and Bush's domestic policy advisor, thinks proselytizing won't be a problem as long as public money isn't directly supporting it and government provides non-religious options. Nevertheless, Bush promises to establish a federal office to assist and defend religious organizations under legal attack. They will need it, because civil libertarians are already trolling for a test case. Says Jean Bethke Elshtain, professor of political ethics at the University of Chicago: "The ingenuity of people who want religion to disappear knows no bounds."

Though he admits that ministry will not replace Medicare, Bush pledges to "look first" to religious groups to help those in need. Already, most churches and synagogues run at least some small social program, from soup kitchens to child care. No one knows how many groups and individuals might be willing to get deeply involved in the lives of the poor. Based on research by University of Arizona sociologist Mark Chaves, however, many congregations will have nothing to do with government money, with or without the protections of Charitable Choice. So one danger of Bush's talk of raising "armies of compassion" as alternatives to government action is simply exaggerated expectations.

On May 24, 1999—seven years into his vice presidency—Gore delivered his first substantive address on religion. Speaking in Atlanta to the Salvation Army, he denounced the "hollow secularism" of the Left and praised the work of faith-based groups in treating social ills.

The punchline was a pledge to form a "new partnership" between church and state. Toward that end, Gore for the first time endorsed Charitable Choice efforts to strengthen the religious liberty of groups getting government money to deliver welfare services. He even promised to expand the law beyond welfare-to-work efforts, to cover drug treatment and juvenile delinquency programs. "We must dare to embrace faith-based approaches that advance our shared goals as Americans," Gore argued.

It seemed a gutsy move. Ed Kilgore, policy director for the Democratic Leadership Council, calls it "the Sister Souljah speech for Al Gore" (referring to Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign rebuke of a rap artist which seemed to establish his independence from left-wing special interests). The day after Gore's address, Julie Segal of the religion-baiting Americans United for the Separation of Church and State was despondent. "I felt like I was cut off at the knees," she told one newspaper.

When it comes to action rather than rhetoric, however, the Clinton-Gore team has so far dared only to embrace the status quo. Federal agencies still squash religious beliefs among would-be service providers, while the administration's record on Charitable Choice is one of obstruction, not observance.

"The single most important obstacle to prompt expansion of this promising innovation is the hostility of the Clinton-Gore administration," says Steve Hilton, communications director for Senator John Ashcroft (R-Mo.), who sponsored the legislation. In December 1996, the Department of Health and Human Services proposed "technical corrections" to the law that would have made groups deemed "pervasively sectarian"—too religious—ineligible for funds. In October 1998, the Department of Justice similarly opposed any federal money for religious groups. The President and Democratic leaders in Congress are singing the same tune.

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If Gore intends to break ranks with the Left on this issue, he has done nothing to suggest it. "He's comfortable with the concept," explains Elaine Kamarck, Gore's senior policy advisor, "as long as there are appropriate constitutional protections."

Actually, the law already contains such protections. The reality is that although Gore will laud "the power of faith" to spark behavioral change, he appears skittish about helping any groups that actually confront destructive behavior with Bible-based morality.

For example, while Gore boasts of new partnerships between religious organizations and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), he has failed to challenge HUD regulations that require all help be offered in a non-religious manner. The agency's blanket ban on proselytizing prevents the International Union of Gospel Missions, the nation's largest association of faith-based homeless shelters, from becoming involved. "HUD officials are friendlier, but we haven't seen regulatory change," says the Reverend Stephen Burger, the group's executive director.

The Vice President also opposes government vouchers that would help poor families escape failing inner-city schools. Ignoring evidence that the moral and academic discipline of religious schools produces higher-achieving students than public schools, Gore invokes church-state separation dogmas to terminate the discussion. "I have always opposed vouchers, and I always will," he promised a Des Moines audience last fall.

At a National PTA last year, Gore discussed how to teach "values" to children, while omitting any role for religious groups. Yet he found time to call for "an active government" that would, for instance, spend more on dubious after-school programs.

"Gore is not going to fundamentally change the way federal programs are organized, financed, and administered," concludes John DiIulio, political scientist at the University of Pennsylvania and an occasional Bush advisor. Indeed, Gore would permit only a limited role for religious groups. "He sees faith as an addition, a supplement," says his advisor Kamarck. "He does not see decreasing the size of the social safety net and replacing it with voluntary organizations." Don Eberly, a leader in civic renewal efforts, puts it more pointedly: "Democrats just don't see it as permissible to treat religion as anything but a private phenomenon."

Gore's Atlanta speech allowed him to rhetorically shed the anti-religious husk that insulates his party leaders from mainstream America on applications of faith. But he would assist only religious providers who are already mostly secularized, or willing to become so in exchange for government funds. His basic approach is to have more private groups help out with existing government programs, while imposing political correctness on their practices. "Gore would like religious groups to be part of the dance," says Marvin Olasky, an academic who has advised Bush, "but the government would still call the tune."

Bush views religion as a leading force for cultural renewal. Gore as a private affair or handmaiden to the state.

Superficially, Bush and Gore strike similar-sounding themes: Both say government programs are too secular, that faith-based approaches are healing social ills, and that church and state should not be afraid to work together. A close look at their records, however, finds important fractures between their positions. They uphold two competing visions of the role of faith in society—with Bush viewing religion as a leading force for cultural renewal, and Gore promoting religion as a private affair or handmaiden to the state.

How much political capital would either man expend to create his version of a faith-friendly government? Bush's strongest constituency, religious conservatives, would be behind him if he were to act. For Gore it would be the reverse: His left wing would fight him tooth and nail if he tried to shield religious good-doers from government meddling. Says Elshtain, "It's hard to imagine the party of Barbra Streisand signing on with this."

Just consider the Charitable Choice provisions that permit religious organizations to use religious criteria to hire staff. When labor unions and gay rights groups file suit, what will a Gore Justice Department do? "My guess is that he would come down strongly for protections against religious discrimination," says Gore ally Ed Kilgore. Translation: Charitable groups doing business with government could not require new employees to share their religious mission.

By contrast, when Texas regulators tried to shut down Teen Challenge, a Christian-based drug rehab center, because its staff lacked state-approved credentials, Bush intervened. Today the group hires mostly former addicts, receives private accreditation, and remains eligible for federal food-stamp money—while making religious commitment the linchpin of its recovery strategies. And so, the group sustains a much higher cure rate than its government-run counterparts.

Perhaps that's a glimpse of a new kind of public square, one neither explicitly sacred, nor forcibly stripped of religion. Even Jefferson, who envisioned a "wall of separation" between church and state, could applaud such a place. Religion, he once wrote, may be "deemed in other countries incompatible with good government, and yet proved by our experience to be its best support."

Searching for What Works

By Marvin Olasky

I've been writing about compassionate conservatism for over ten years. Recently I traveled to the city of Minneapolis looking for specific examples of compassionate programs.

One stop was the Jeremiah project. Born in 1993, it has generated big contributions from Target Stores, the General Mills Foundation, and the liberally inclined Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches. Last year the organization moved into a $3 million facility for 18 single moms and their children. Its program follows the textbook social work assumption that if

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patrons provide "access to affordable housing, child care, health care, support services and meaningful employment," then economic self-sufficiency will follow.

Executive director Gloria Perez Jordan sketched Jeremiah's principles: "We did a focus group with single moms. What they really wanted was better housing, and they wanted to take classes for two years rather than work in low-paying jobs." (Who wouldn't?) "We believe that putting these women in this nice facility gives them hope.... Living in poor conditions was getting in the way of their work or school efforts." I couldn't help thinking that historical research shows living in poor conditions *spurs* effort, because hard work becomes the ticket out.

Given the biblical name of the project, I wondered whether biblical values were at the program's core. Jordan insisted no proselytizing went on: "Once a month we do talk with the women about how they are nurturing their spirit. It can be any religion, it can be yoga. But we're not against the Bible: We had one class on women in the Bible and the strength they show."

Since one ticket out of welfare for women is matrimony, it seemed odd the program did not emphasize ways to enter into and build strong marriages, so that children would have fathers. And since the second best way off the dole is to start at a low-paying job then work hard, gain skills, and move up, I asked whether the program concentrates on jobs. "No," Jordan answered, "we emphasize education. All of our participants are to be in school so that, when they enter the workforce for full-time positions, they will have jobs starting at a minimum of $12 per hour, with benefits."

But Jordan recognized some of her assumptions were unworkable. "At first," she related, "we told participants that they

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Doing Lots with Very Little

The face of the Reverend Eugene Rivers has appeared on the cover of *Newsweek.* His words have graced the broad sheets of nearly every major newspaper in America. In Boston, so many people want to speak with him that a pit-stop at a McDonald's turns into an hour-long gabfest. Rivers deserves this fame, and owes it to the hard-working, decentralized, and very tiny organization that he's built.

One could argue that Rivers' small Azusa Christian Community has done more for Boston than any other church in the city—the very large Roman Catholic one included. Through a mixture of Christian charity, scriptural principle, and charisma, Rivers has turned gang members into family men and helped replace blight with free enterprise. In the last three years, Rivers' home base in the Four Corners neighborhood has witnessed a dramatic turnaround: The children of new homeowners play in the yards of former crack houses, while long-vacant lots bustle with the beginnings of new businesses. Through the Ten Points Coalition, a city-wide alliance of African-American churches Rivers helped establish, the Reverend's methods have made their way into nearly every corner of the Bay City.

His own organization still focuses on Four Corners. Its programs serve about 3,000 youths each year—roughly 20 percent of the children in Boston's Dorchester section.

The most striking aspect of this work is that an almost impossibly small group does all of it. The full-time staff of Rivers' organization hovers around ten, with another ten or so administrators volunteering at any given time. Rather than build up his own church, Rivers has encouraged those he serves to go to the churches they've traditionally attended. Sunday services at Azusa still draw only dozens of people. Given the attention he's received, Rivers could have a staff numbering in the hundreds if he wanted. Jesse Jackson's Operation Push, for example, employs 73 individuals including a driver and a music director.

Rivers, on the other hand, was borrowing a friend's beat-up subcompact when *TAE* visited. "The concerns of building a huge organization were not what we wanted to deal with," says Larry Mayes, the chief organizer of Azusa's Ella J. Baker House. "It's actually better that we are small. We couldn't handle all of this if we had to worry about the concerns of being big."

To be sure, part of Azusa's success stems from the people involved. The church started when a group of idealistic, Christian, ivy-league types decided to move into one of the worst sections of Boston's inner-city. Tiffany Cunningham, a Harvard-educated neurologist who heads a summer science program for inner-city youth, is typical of Azusa members. She tells the *Boston Globe* she began working with Rivers after questioning "why God put this gift in me, this love for science."

Doing so much with so few people requires very hard work. Rivers sleeps about six hours on a good night and sometimes has to answer the office phones himself. "We have people who work like ants—who can leverage 300 times their own weight," explains Rivers. "It's the faith and desire to do something that drives them to it." Nobody at Azusa simply keeps the books; every employee plays a role in direct service to the community.

There are no memoranda or top-down orders at Azusa. "At this point there's no doubt we're going to have to bring on some more people," Rivers says. "But I'm going to be looking for the same kinds of people, people who can get out there and work hard."

—Eli Lehrer is a TAE *contributing writer.*

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could stay in the building until they graduate from a two-year or four-year course, and then for six months afterwards. But we found that women were joining the program for housing needs, not to break out of poverty." Now, due to state welfare reforms, all participants must work at least 20 hours a week, with the program providing child care.

Recently, Jordan continued, the program has begun emphasizing work more, along with budgeting and careful monitoring of academic progress. So welfare reform is stiffening even a warm-hearted but fuzzy-headed program like this.

Next I visited Minneapolis's Phillips neighborhood, located about a dozen blocks from downtown, and full of welfare recipients. Thanks to the recent welfare reform, refusing to take steps toward immediate employment can lead to a 30 percent reduction in benefits in Minnesota, and the prospect of being dropped from the rolls entirely. So far, perhaps one quarter of recipients have been sanctioned; typically they have other sources of income that they don't want to give up to enter state-sponsored programs.

Among the three-quarters of recipients who do cooperate, many enter short-term, government-funded training programs like the one offered locally by Goodwill Industries and Easter Seals of Minnesota for prospective bank tellers. I visited a class of eight women in their twenties and thirties, where instructor Tracy Norby sought answers to real questions: "John would like to withdraw $250 from his savings account. His current total is $1,236.89. What would John's total be after the withdrawal?" "Tyler wants $1,000 back in $20 bills. How many $20 bills would you give him?" "Blake wants $40 all in quarters. How many rolls would he receive?"

This preacher does more than preach. He, his wife, and their five children live in the poor neighborhood.

In between drilling on specific teller problems, Tracy taught workplace conduct. "Be on time every day, and stay until your agreed-upon end time." "Do not make or take personal phone calls except on your lunch hour." "Attitude is everything! Greet people with a smile. Know that you will be asked to do things that you may not enjoy." "When answering the phone or greeting customers, use the words *please* and *may I help you*."

The training sessions run four weeks, and late one Friday afternoon students were eager to talk about how tired they were of sitting around on welfare. They wanted to earn money and get paid vacations. Only one mother of five seemed to be there against her will.

Goodwill vice president Kelly Matter reported that the one-year-old program had produced 63 graduates, 58 out working. She explained that Goodwill/Easter Seals runs three other training programs: retail (in cooperation with Target Stores), automotive (which teaches how to do oil changes), and construction skills (in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity).

All of this was impressive. But I wondered about that essential "someone to depend on." What happens when work becomes boring, family or boyfriend problems emerge, cars and childcare arrangements break down? Where is the support system, external and internal?

Ed Twyford was a heroin addict and cocaine user in New York during the 1980s, floating in and out of five treatment programs. "Left to my own devices, I screwed up," he says. Today he is director of day-to-day operations at Rebuild Resources Academy, a home and workplace for people recovering from alcoholism and addiction. "I had to learn that God's in charge." His boss, Fred Myers, had the same experience two decades earlier, when he sobered up in an Alcoholics Anonymous burnout program. Fifteen years ago he used that background to start the Twin Cities program of which he is now president.

"I've seen those government addiction programs," Myers barked as he showed me around the new Rebuild campus he was opening just north of Minneapolis. "Those government programs succeed with fewer than one out of ten people. They run a program for a few weeks and then dump a guy on the street with no community or family support. The name of the game is helping a guy out, sticking with him, for God's sake. The government types say treatment, treatment, treatment. But treatment is a bridge to a support system, and these guys have no support system."

Fifteen years ago Myers envisioned a program where recovering people would work alongside others who were in the same boat, sharing problems and deliverance from some of the day-to-day temptations. A local church raised start-up money, and Myers sold 100 shares of "stock" at $50 each, telling buyers that their investment return would be satisfaction over the years. The 500th recovering addict or alcoholic was graduated from the program on December 23, 1998.

Some 40 percent of those entering the program finish it over 8 to 18 months; 70 percent of those graduates become productive citizens. But that's only a 28 percent success rate. True, Myers replied, but "I figure that's four times better than the government programs. And every guy who gets through saves taxpayers half a million dollars, if you think of all the programs, all the thefts, all the jail time."

Are private funds available for similar projects elsewhere? Not enough, which is why poverty-fighting tax credits are needed: they would allow taxpayers to send less money to Washington and more directly to private poverty-fighting organizations like Rebuild that believe in the power of God to change human lives and rescue those who would otherwise destroy themselves.

Elsewhere in Minneapolis, we had dinner with Mitch Pearlstein, his wife, Diane, and their adopted eight-year-old daughter, Nicole. Nicole came to Mitch and Diane three years ago, after five years spent in 16 foster care or

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emergency placements, following her birth to a woman who smoked crack during her pregnancy. Nicole is beautiful, with brown skin and a face that at 16 will be ready for a cover girl photo shoot—if she learns to stay in one place. But at eight, she cannot. During dinner and conversation afterwards, she repeatedly pops up from the table and disappears. During one of her absences the conversation turned to the girl first thrust into Diane's lap on Easter weekend, 1991.

That's when Nicole's birthmother asked Diane, a social worker, to help care for her six-week-old baby. Diane did, and kept track of Nicole over the next several years as the tender mercies of the state yanked her from foster home to foster home. Diane rejoiced in 1995 when Nicole was put in her first pre-adoptive placement, but her parents-to-be found her hard to handle, and after a year they couldn't take any more. At that point Mitch and Diane decided to adopt her.

We talked about what it took to make such a decision. Diane tiredly filled me in on details of the past three years and the improvement of the past nine months, measured by Nicole's lack of interest in repeating her attempt last year to burn up one of the family's dogs, along with the house.

Mitch, 51, was more upbeat. Adopting Nicole was "one of the two best decisions I've ever made, the other proposing to Diane. This is my life project." "But what if the project fails?" I asked. Mitch responded fervently, "It can't fail. We're her only hope. We're..." He stopped, not wanting to sound grandiose, but I could complete the sentence: "the only people who stand between her and a likely future of drugs, degradation, and despair."

Mitch replied slowly, "That would be the pattern."

On Sunday morning we headed over to Bethlehem Baptist Church and the poor neighborhood surrounding it. A makeshift parking lot stage was set up, and jugglers and clowns practiced on stilts and unicycles. Most members of this overwhelmingly white church drive here from more affluent areas, but 60 church families have actually moved into the neighborhood to involve themselves in local activities. Some provide a weekly grocery bus to transport vehicle-less residents to three different markets. Others lead clubs for local kids, or coach sports teams. Still others visit and pray for the sick, or evangelize door to door.

In the parking lot, a band with guitars and bongos led the congregation singing in Spanish about Christ as Lord of all creation. Then John Piper, Bethlehem's pastor for two decades and a well-known evangelical author, preached on a passage from the book of Romans. Piper said that God showed his compassion by suffering with and dying for us, and by offering to take us into His family. He spoke of those who believe they have nothing within them to make God care for them, and then proclaimed that God nevertheless does care. God, in short, has made mankind His project, refusing to be frustrated by our frequent disappointments.

After the service the banner carriers, clowns, jugglers, unicyclists, and stilt walkers led waving and singing Bethlehemites in a march through the streets, with many neighborhood residents coming out to wave back. The march stopped at 24th Street, a rough corner where Piper prayed alongside boarded-up storefronts, "Lord, you are sovereign over each house in this neighborhood. We pray for your blessing for families that need reconciling, for those so hopeless that they give themselves over to drugs and alcohol." The procession later stopped in front of the Meadowbrook Women's Clinic, which provides abortions, and Piper prayed again.

But the preacher does more than preach. He, his wife, and their five children live in the neighborhood. A nearby murder altered Mrs. Piper's thinking about certain noises. Now she thinks, "Is that a firecracker or a gun?"

Voluntary moves from pleasant surroundings to mean streets are only one indication of this congregation's compassion. To help with transracial adoptions—much needed to keep minority kids like Nicole from languishing in foster care—the church has started the Micah Fund. One hundred forty-five Micah Fund babies, including one adopted by the Pipers, have been assisted. Bethlehem pays all administrative expenses, so that contributions to the fund go directly to helping adoptive parents.

A block away from Bethlehem Baptist squats Masterworks, a job-generating small business run by church member Tim Gladder. Wearing a Victory Motorcycles cap, Tim talked of how his ten employees start with offline assembly work like putting washers on screws. "The key problem," he noted, "is not starting a job but staying with it. A guy quits his job because, after he had a fight with his girlfriend, the wrong music is playing that day. So many people get to 35 and they've never had a job longer than six months. They take a month off, then see that the rent is due tomorrow and think, I'd better get a job. You can train people, but until they break this habit, training will be wasted."

Masterworks tries to snap the cycle by providing incentives to stay on the job at least a year. Pay starts at minimum wage but goes up by a quarter per hour each month during the first year. After a year, employees get paid vacation, the right to be paid on piecework—they can earn more that way—and profit-sharing. Gladder passionately sums up: "It amounts to $8.15 per hour, or $10 if they're fast, and an additional $500 in profit-sharing. It's so important to achieve some consistency at work; if they get it, that discipline carries over into other areas, so they'll stick with a lease, and maybe they'll even stick with a marriage."

Gladder's most frustrating experience came when a stellar worker made it to 51 weeks, just short of paid vacation and piecework incentive pay, but then had a domestic fight and simply didn't come to work for a week. "I had to let him go," said Gladder. "It wouldn't have been helpful for him or others."

But the good experiences, such as that of the man who started on the assembly line and has risen to production manager, are also vivid. Gladder's understanding of how to be compassionate has changed over the years: "I used to tell someone, If you get punched out by your boyfriend, take the day off. Now I find myself saying, You've got to show up. We have to break that cycle of short-term jobs."

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A Survey of Church-Government Anti-poverty Partnerships

By Amy Sherman

The Charitable Choice provisions of our 1996 welfare reform, as earlier articles in this series point out, allow bold new collaborations between churches and government in serving the poor. The Charitable Choice law prohibits public officials from discriminating against religious social service providers who compete for government contracts. It protects the religious integrity and character of faith-based organizations that accept government dollars by granting them important rights: to retain authority over their mission and governing board; to maintain a religious atmosphere in their facilities; and to seek staff who agree with their religious beliefs.

Simultaneously, Charitable Choice protects the civil liberties of clients receiving services. Constitutionally, religious organizations must not use government funds for purposes of "sectarian worship, instruction, or proselytization," and they must not discriminate against beneficiaries on the basis of religion, or require them to participate in religious practices. In addition, if a client objects to receiving social services from a faith-based provider, the government must ensure, under Charitable Choice, that he or she obtains services from another organization.

On the books now for three years, Charitable Choice has produced a notable, albeit modest, number of new financial relationships between religious social service providers and government. My recent survey of nine states (CA, IL, MA, MI, MS, NY, TX, VA, WI), published by the Center for Public Justice, identified 84 new partnerships focused on moving welfare recipients into jobs. Three-quarters of these contracts involved a direct financial relationship between a government entity (for example, the state or county department of human services) and a religious organization or church. The other quarter involved indirect funding mechanisms (that is, a government contracted with a large non-profit, such as Goodwill Industries, and Goodwill used some of these funds to subcontract for specified services with a religious group). Just under half of these contracts were for less than $25,000. But 18 percent involved amounts exceeding $100,000, and 7 percent, amounts over $500,000.

Eighty-four new Charitable Choice partnerships may not sound like much, but they are significant for at least two reasons. First, these initiatives involve hundreds of churches and engage the lives of thousands of welfare recipients. Second, over half of these financial relationships involve churches and religious bodies that had not previously cooperated formally with government—including some evangelical Protestant organizations historically worried that government collaboration would squelch their religious identity. The upshot is that welfare recipients in some localities now have a more diverse array of service providers to choose from. Through these 84 initiatives, men and women are getting publicly funded, explicitly faith-based mentoring, job training, transportation, and drug rehabilitation.

Some critics of Charitable Choice worry that low-income clients will be bullied by evangelists operating welfare services underwritten with taxpayer funds. Such fears have little basis in fact. Out of the thousands of clients participating in the initiatives I studied, I heard only two complaints. In both cases, the clients felt that they had been subtly pressured to attend church; in both cases (following Charitable Choice's guidelines), they quit the faith-based program and joined a secular alternative.

So far, religious groups accepting government funds are not having to sell their souls, and clients' civil liberties are being respected.

And on the other side of the table, religious groups receiving government money under Charitable Choice have also registered few complaints. A few voiced some uncertainty as to "how far they could go" in integrating spiritual ministry into their social service programs. But the vast majority reported that the church-state question was a "non-issue." They said they enjoyed the trust of their government partners and that they had been straightforward about their religious identity. Since clients' participation in their programs was voluntary, these FBOs felt free to "be religious" since clients were free *not* to participate.

So far, then, Charitable Choice is accomplishing its aims without notable problems. Religious groups accepting government funding are not having to sell their souls, and clients' civil liberties are being respected.

This happy result appears to be happening both as a *consequence* of Charitable Choice, and *in spite of* it. Charitable Choice's most important effect thus far is that it has made church-state collaboration plausible for Americans who had previously assumed, under a misguided interpretation of the First Amendment, that such partnering was somehow unconstitutional. Given the green light of Washington's blessing on such relationships, government officials have felt comfortable reaching out to religious groups, looking to them for help in achieving welfare reform's mandate of moving welfare recipients to independence.

But many government officials and religious people remain utterly ignorant of the opportunities the Charitable Choice law has provided. Almost nowhere are government officials incorporating detailed Charitable Choice language into the contracts they write with their new, religious partners. (Wisconsin and Texas are exceptions among the nine states I studied.) Government officials also have been slow to redesign

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the process of establishing social service contracts to accord with the letter and spirit of Charitable Choice.

Since Charitable Choice seeks to create a level playing field on which both religious and secular social service organizations can compete for government contracts, public officials need to formally amend (or eliminate) procedures that effectively shut out faith-based organizations. For example, many government departments issue "Requests for Proposals" (RFPs) to social service organizations that seek government funding. But current mailing lists for the RFPs rarely include religious organizations, since historically they have not been "in the loop." This needs to be fixed.

Another example: many government departments have standard "boilerplate" language used in contracts with social service organizations which often includes statements prohibiting the contractor from any form of discrimination in hiring. Officials should strike such provisions from contracts with churches, since, under Charitable Choice, these groups may select employees on the basis of religion.

In sync with the spirit of Charitable Choice, officials ought to modify the entire contracting process to make it more friendly to effective but small religious groups with no experience in collaborating with government. Bureaucrats could provide more training to faith groups on how to write a proper proposal. The scale of contracts may also need to be adjusted. Government departments used to drawing up contracts for $50,000 or more should inaugurate grant streams involving fewer dollars. Small community-based religious organizations are more likely to have the organizational capacity to administer a $15,000 contract than a $150,000 one.

The government and faith community collaborations that Charitable Choice has encouraged have already produced important benefits. New financial relationships have begun, but also new non-financial forms of collaboration. The traditional social services network is being broadened and energized through the inclusion of new helpers.

And these fresh troops are doing many new things. Many congregations have started providing social services that even they had not previously attempted. Specifically, many have moved from "commodity-based benevolence" (operating food pantries and used clothing centers) to "relational" ministry—working intensively with needy families, face-to-face, for months. While our survey uncovered collaborations on a wide variety of social services like child care, transportation, drug rehabilitation, homeless services, English courses, and parenting classes, the most common initiatives were mentoring and job training programs that involved extensive personal contact between poor individuals and their religious helpers. This is the most important "added value" that religious organizations bring to poverty relief.

Moving welfare recipients to independence requires intensive labor. Most of the women making the transition need individualized emotional and practical support, something government caseworkers rarely provide. Caring volunteers from faith-based organizations, on the other hand, can and do provide tremendous personal assistance, encouragement, and accountability to poor families moving off the dole. Some religious groups are even well-positioned to handle "hard-to-serve" clients who require specialized attention, tough love, hope, and spiritual motivation if they are to successfully change their lives.

In addition to the procedural changes outlined earlier, the government will need to take one other action to gain maximum benefit from Charitable Choice: It must interpret the law's prohibition against using government funds for inherently religious activity in a narrow way. Religious groups must be able to refer to biblical principles in their job-readiness classes, to pray with program participants who desire it, to keep their religious character while offering assistance. If government officials go overboard with sweeping prohibitions and force church groups to put their faith on the shelf while serving the poor who also have faith, then the robustly religious faith-based organizations that so often achieve the best results for struggling families will be pushed out of the picture, and Charitable Choice will fail. And that would be a terrible shame.

The Chicago Compromise

By Joe Loconte

In early 1998, Steven McFarland, executive director of the Christian Legal Society, received a letter from the Chicago Public Schools asking for advice about religion in the classroom. Marc Stern, assistant executive director of the American Jewish Congress, received the same letter. The two—who sometimes collaborate, sometimes contend in church-state disputes—flew to Chicago, expecting to field the usual questions about prayer, religious holidays, and Bible clubs.

Instead, they were drawn into a discussion about how to protect public school children from a reign of terror: More than 60 students had been killed over an 18-month period, some caught in the crossfire of rival gangs. A few minutes before the men were to speak, a school official told them about an eight-year-old girl who was assaulted on her way to school. She tried to get into three churches, but found all of them locked. McFarland turned to his colleague: "I don't think they want to hear about Christmas crèche scenes and Halloween parties. They're trying to keep these kids alive."

What has emerged from that discussion is the most ambitious partnership between schools and churches in the nation. Over 300 congregations—Christian, Jewish, Islamic—are now working in Chicago's public classrooms, offering everything from computer labs to crisis counseling. When gunfire ripped through the beleaguered Robert Taylor Homes in fall 1998, teachers watched helplessly as parents kept their kids out of school. "A third of my population was affected, and it was growing like wildfire," says Frances Oden, principal at Beethoven Elementary. "The children were not here, and we could not educate them."

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School officials called on church leaders for help, and pastors from around the city showed up to walk students to and from class. Last October, a plan was announced to recruit at least 500 ministers and church members as mentors for troubled kids.

The catalyst for this rush of religious outreach is Paul Vallas, one of the nation's most respected school superintendents. Tapped by Democratic Mayor Richard Daley in 1995 to turn around Chicago's dysfunctional schools, Vallas gets high marks from both Bill Clinton and Bill Bennett for his classroom reforms. Much less well known, though, is his comprehensive campaign to recruit religious communities to help rehabilitate—and remoralize—public education. "We do everything with the churches," Vallas says, "short of evangelizing."

Vallas began agitating for greater religious influence in the schools in 1996, when he summoned over 200 religious leaders to a summit exploring ways to support the city's students. Since then, he has made church-school partnerships a cornerstone of his reforms. At a service in St. Thomas Episcopal Church last August, Vallas told parishioners to "be engaged" with their local schools, saying that the wall separating church and state is "much thinner than experts like to admit." Two weeks later he joined Chicago Archbishop Francis George and 100 ministers to mobilize congregations to reduce youth violence.

In a recent interview in his downtown office, Vallas complained that what should be a common sense alliance—linking a neighborhood's most trusted institutions—is instead a feared and litigated relationship. "If we're going to make public schools work, we've got to break the isolation they experience," he says. "You've got to open these schools to partnering with the strongest institutions in the community."

The state has not established religion; it just no longer holds it in contempt.

The Vallas gospel is finding fertile ground. The Roseland Clergy Association sends ministers into seven schools to walk the halls and get to know students likely to be drawn into gangs. La Villita Christian Development Corporation runs an intervention program for about 200 truant and at-risk kids. The Near North Ministerial Alliance designates churches as safe havens for students who live in the Cabrini-Green housing project. Partnerships unimaginable not long ago are becoming routine.

Vallas has also launched bold and detailed plans to remake Chicago public schools in the image of their religious rivals. Almost alone among major public school officials, he admits what numerous studies show: Urban Catholic schools are doing the best job of educating the inner-city poor. His explicit aim is to replicate in city classrooms the strengths of religious education. "I've used the parochial model—make no bones about it—in revamping the schools," he says. "There are things they are doing that are lessons to be learned."

Here's what Vallas has culled from religious educators. First, set high academic standards. The Chicago system became one of the first to end social promotion. "Parochial schools don't socially promote, they expel," Vallas says. "Only public schools socially promote. And they dumb down the standards and dumb down the curriculum."

Second, develop a quality curriculum. The city's high school curriculum has been entirely redesigned—modeled on the city's most successful Catholic schools—to require competency in math, English, social studies, science, and a foreign language.

Third, maintain discipline. Eighty percent of the city's elementary students and half of the high school students are in uniform. The schools enforce a zero-tolerance policy and ship off chronic troublemakers to one of 22 alternative schools.

Finally, introduce character education. In 1997, Vallas assembled a coalition of religious leaders for advice on a character education curriculum, and he hired Leon Hendricks, a former parochial school principal, to design it. "We have an obligation to teach children to be good citizens, to be moral people," Vallas says. "An educated person without morals, without convictions, without values can be a very dangerous person." Three hundred character lessons are being woven into academic courses for all of the city's 557 schools.

It is here that religious communities probably have the most to offer—and they are being asked to ante up. Archie Hargraves, pastor of South Shore Community Church and a 50-year veteran in church-based outreach, says the problems afflicting young people are driving the new thinking. "Here are the new realities," he explains. "You have kids who do not have fundamental conceptions of right and wrong. You have babies raising babies, and the babies are not rooted in anything. You have kids who think they are lords of the earth, that it's not wrong to kill, or steal, or do any of these things."

South Shore Church has set up a computer lab above its sanctuary to keep kids busy in the afternoons. Schools in the city's Back-of-the-Yards neighborhood send dropouts and criminal offenders to the Sister Irene Dugan Institute, a public school adopted by Holy Cross Church. At Beethoven Elementary, ministers roam the halls and mentor at-risk kids. "They are not teaching any particular faith. They are teaching character," says principal Frances Oden. "And this is what a lot of our children need." Forty-eight of the city's schools have established teen pregnancy programs that try to connect unwed mothers to congregations. In addition to offering material support, educators have another goal in mind: teach the girls not to get pregnant again. About 2,000 teens are in the program, officials say, and none has reported another pregnancy.

The growing web of relationships with congregations led to a concordat, approved last year by the school system. A few of the ground rules: All activities must remain "wholly secular"; student participation is voluntary; schools must be willing to partner with all community groups, not just religious ones. Drafted with help from McFarland and Stern, the agreement quickly became a model for national guidelines endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. "For too long we've been afraid

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of establishing religion, and we haven't been faith-friendly," says Michelle Doyle, director of Nonpublic Education at the Department. "We've looked at all these community organizations except the faith-based groups, and when you look at a community, that doesn't make sense."

Guidelines or not, however, the Chicago partnerships are drawing fire. Last year the school system awarded nearly $375,000 in grants to 17 churches and religious groups, prompting criticisms and charges of bias. Ira Youdovin, executive vice president of the Chicago Board of Rabbis, dismissed the effort in the *Chicago Tribune* as "anathema to anyone except evangelicals."

So far, though, there have been no lawsuits. Politically speaking, it's unlikely that civil libertarians could do much to discourage a Democratic reformer like Vallas. Neither would they have a very strong case: The schools remain secular, though much friendlier to religious influences. Teachers don't read from the Bible or recite prayers; they are simply more willing to steer needy children toward people who do. The state has not established religion; it just no longer holds it in contempt. Who can argue with that?

A Downside to Government Support of Religious Charity?

To discuss the advantages and disadvantages of "Charitable Choice" arrangements that channel government funds to religious institutions, the American Enterprise Institute recently hosted a discussion among Carl Esbeck, director of the Center for Law and Religious Liberty and a drafter of Charitable Choice legislation; Michael Horowitz, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute; and Marshall Breger, a law professor at the Catholic University of America. Excerpts follow.

CARL ESBECK: Charitable Choice allows federal welfare funds to be paid not only to secular organizations that provide social services to the poor but also to faith-based groups that assist the needy. Charitable Choice has three principles. First, nondiscrimination by government. Second, protecting the religious free-exercise rights of the ultimate beneficiaries—the poor and needy. The third principle is to protect the religious integrity of the faith-based organizations offering social services.

Charitable Choice became law in August 1996, as part of federal welfare reform. A version of it was also added to a 1998 federal law.

Charitable Choice is normally criticized from the Left for violating the First Amendment by "establishing religion." The Right complains that Charitable Choice will let the government co-opt faith-based organizations and turn them into governmental-type social service agencies which lack the superior effectiveness of private-sector organizations.

Consider the first principle, nondiscrimination. Under Charitable Choice, when government chooses to involve the private sector in delivering social services, it must select providers without regard to religion. This does not mean any particular faith-based organizations will be funded; so it emphatically is not affirmative action for religious groups.

As for the second principle—that the ultimate beneficiaries ought not to be coerced regarding their religious faith or lack thereof—the act specifically protects them. First, if they do not want to receive services from a faith-based provider, the government must make available a secular provider. (That is the choice in Charitable Choice.) And even if the beneficiaries enroll in a faith-based program, they cannot be discriminated against in that program based on their faith or lack thereof, and they cannot be required to participate in religious practices.

The third principle is to protect the religious integrity of faith-based charities. First, remember that the *pre*-Charitable Choice welfare system was a relentless engine of secularization, because in order to receive government funding, a charitable group had to show it was "non-sectarian."

When we sat down to write down Charitable Choice, we wanted to change that. Consider just one phrase in the act: "They shall retain their independence from federal, state, and local governments, including such organizations' control over

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Dangers Aplenty

Public funding of religious charity fogs our vision of the real poverty problems—which are, at root, spiritual.

Christian social work is only partly about providing for the material needs of the poor; it must also address spiritual necessities. It is aimed at a transformation in the heart of the recipient. And also one in the heart of the donor—creating a deeper sensitivity to those in need, and an inspiration to become poor in spirit, as Christ directs in the Gospels. Mother Teresa had it right: "We do not believe in class struggle, but class encounter, where the rich save the poor and the poor save the rich."

On a practical level, we have to be wary, whenever government starts funding religious charity, of not only state censorship of the mission message, but also of self-censorship.

If we want to expand private charity (and doing so is a moral imperative, given the failure of the welfare state), a more direct means is at our disposal. The charitable tax deduction can be expanded. It's not a new idea, but it is simple and straightforward. It permits people to keep more of their private dollars private, and it introduces no new strictures on recipient organizations.

Private charities perform miracles every day in the service of their fellow man and God. We can build on this system without changing the focus of service toward the state, which ill-thought-out reforms could do.

—Father Robert Sirico is president of the Acton Institute in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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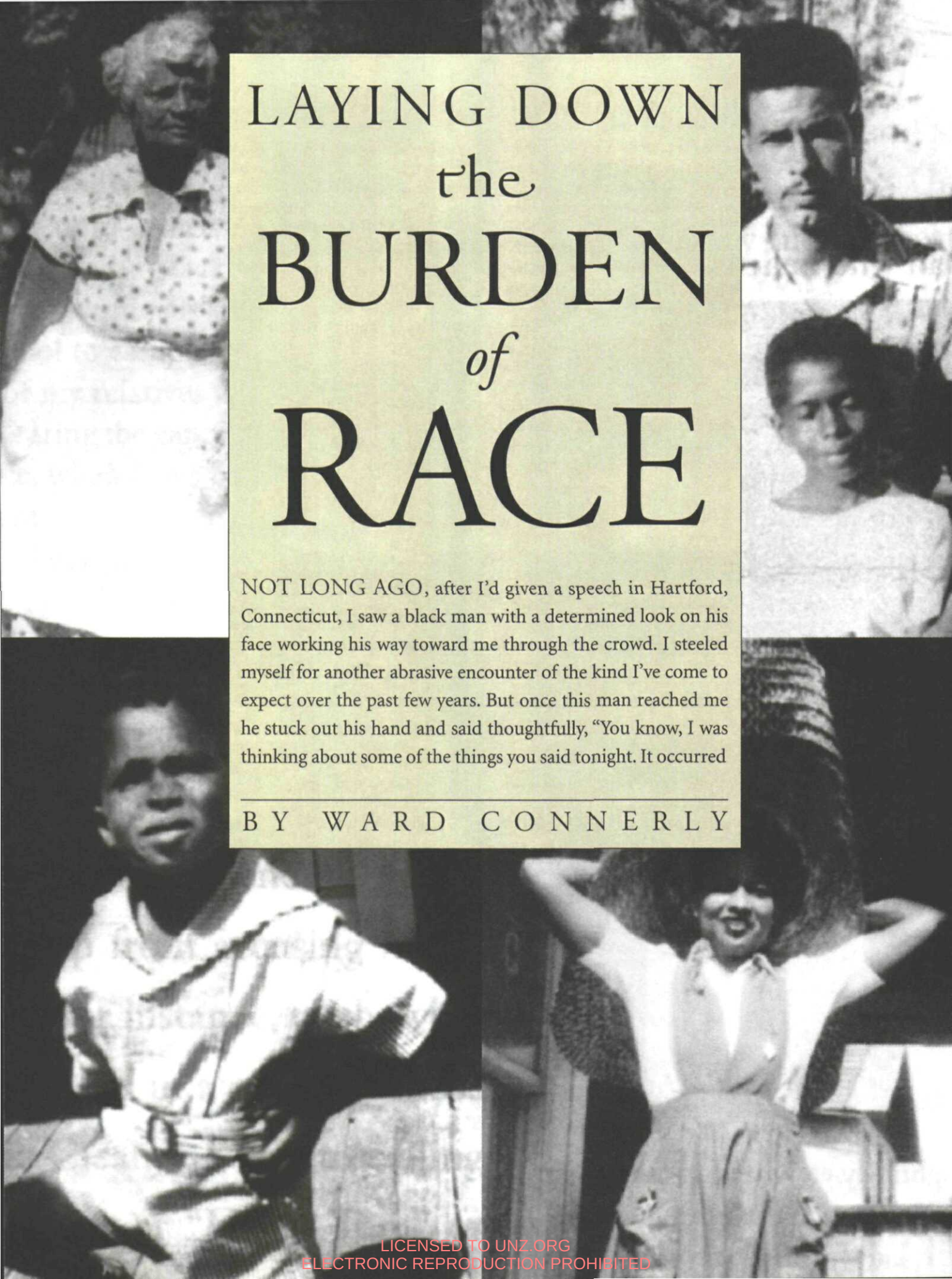

LAYING DOWN the BURDEN of RACE

NOT LONG AGO, after I'd given a speech in Hartford, Connecticut, I saw a black man with a determined look on his face working his way toward me through the crowd. I steeled myself for another abrasive encounter of the kind I've come to expect over the past few years. But once this man reached me he stuck out his hand and said thoughtfully, "You know, I was thinking about some of the things you said tonight. It occurred

BY WARD CONNERLY

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to me that black people have just got to learn to lay down the burden. It's like we grew up carrying a bag filled with heavy weights on our shoulders. We just have to stop totin' that bag."

I agreed with him. I knew as he did exactly what was in this bag: weakness and guilt, anger, and self-hatred.

I have made a commitment not to tote racial grievances, because the status of victim is so seductive and so available to anyone with certain facial features or a certain cast to his skin. But laying down these burdens can be tricky, as I was reminded not long after this Connecticut meeting. I had just checked into the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco to attend an annual dinner as master of ceremonies. After getting to my room, I realized that I'd left my briefcase in the car and started to go back to the hotel parking garage for it. As I was getting off the basement elevator, I ran into a couple of elderly white men who seemed a little disoriented. When they saw me, one of them said, "Excuse me, are you the man who unlocks the meeting room?"

I did an intellectual double-take and then, with my racial hackles rising, answered with as much irritation as I could pack into my voice: "No, I'm *not* the man who unlocks the rooms."

The two men shrank back and I walked on, fuming to myself about how racial profiling is practiced every day in subtle forms by people who would otherwise piously condemn it in state troopers working the New Jersey Turnpike. As I stalked toward the garage, I didn't feel uplifted by my righteous anger. On the contrary, I felt crushed by it. It was a heavy burden, so heavy, in fact, that I stopped and stood there for a minute, sagging under its weight. Then I tried to see myself through the eyes of the two old men I'd just run into: someone who was black, yes, but more importantly, someone without luggage, striding purposefully out of the elevator as if on a mission, dressed in a semi-uniform of blazer and gray slacks.

I turned around and retraced my steps.

"What made you think I was the guy who unlocks the meeting rooms?" I asked when I caught up with them.

"You were dressed a little like a hotel employee, sir," the one who had spoken earlier said in a genuinely deferential way. "Believe me, I meant no insult."

"Well, I hope you'll forgive me for being abrupt," I said, and after a quick handshake I headed back to the garage, feeling immensely relieved.

IF WE ARE TO LAY THIS BURDEN DOWN for good, we must be committed to letting go of racial classifications—not getting beyond race by taking race more into account, as Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun disastrously advised, but just getting beyond race period as a foundation for public policy.

Yet, I know that race is a scar in America. I first saw this scar at the beginning of my life in the segregated South. Black people should not deny that this mark exists: it is part of our connection to America. But we should also resist all of those, black and white, who want to rip open that scar and make race a raw and angry wound that continues to define and divide us.

Photos on facing page, clockwise from top left:

"Mom" (actually my grandmother) was a forceful woman with a bronze complexion and freckles, and my link between a damaged past and an unknown future.

Next is me with my Uncle Arthur—having grown up family-enriched, I know for a fact that the clichés about black family "pathology" are dead wrong.

My biological mother Grace was a beautiful woman with a full exotic face.

This is me during my early years in the heart of Dixie. I didn't know I was the great-grandson of a woman who had been born into slavery.

My grandfather Eli Soniea was an ambitious man with a feel for business. He was also a no-nonsense type who didn't like anyone, especially his own kin, putting on airs.

Left to their own devices, I believe, Americans will eventually merge and melt into each other. Throughout our history, there has been a constant intermingling of people—even during the long apartheid of segregation and Jim Crow. It is malicious as well as unreasonable not to acknowledge that in our own time the conditions for anger have diminished and the conditions for connection have improved.

We all know the compelling statistics about the improvements in black life: increased social and vocational mobility, increased personal prestige and political power. But of all the positive data that have accumulated since the Civil Rights Act of 1964—when America finally decided to leave its racial past behind—the finding that gives me most hope is the recent survey showing that nearly 90 percent of all teenagers in America report having at least one close personal friend of another race.

My wife Ilene is white. I have two racially mixed children and three grandchildren, two of whose bloodlines are even more mixed as a result of my son's marriage to a woman of half-Asian descent. So my own personal experience tells me that the passageway to that place where all racial division ends goes directly through the human heart.

Not long ago, Mike Wallace came to California to interview Ilene and me for a segment of "60 Minutes." He seemed shocked when I told him that race wasn't a big topic in our family. He implied that we were somehow disadvantaging the kids. But Ilene and I decided a long time ago to let our kids find their way in this world without toting the bag of race. They are lucky, of course, to have grown up after the great achievements of the civil rights movement, which changed America's heart as much as its laws. But we have made sure that the central question for our children, since the moment they came into this world, has always been *who* are you, not *what* are you. When we ignore appeals to group identity and focus instead on individuals and

Ward Connerly is a businessman and regent of the University of California. This is excerpted from his new book Creating Equal: My Fight Against Race Preferences, *from Encounter Books.*

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their individual humanity, we are inviting the principles of justice present since the American founding to come inside our contemporary American homes.

I WON'T PRETEND THIS IS always easy. While a senior at college, I fell in love with an effervescent white woman named Ilene. When Ilene's parents first learned how serious we were about each other, they reacted with dismay and spent long hours on the phone trying to keep the relationship from developing further. Hoping for support from my own relatives, I went home one weekend and told Mom (the grandmother who had raised me) about Ilene. She was cold and negative. "Why can't you find yourself a nice colored girl?" she blurted out. I walked out of the house and didn't contact her for a long time afterward.

HE WAS SUNK DOWN

IN THE MATTRESS,

A BAG OF BONES.

HIS HANDS AND FEET WERE

GNARLED AND KNOBBY.

BUT IN HIS FACE

I SAW

MY OWN REFLECTION.

Ilene and I now felt secretive and embattled. Marrying "outside your race" was no easy decision in 1962. I knew that Ilene had no qualms about challenging social norms, but I was less sure that she could deal with exclusion by her family, which seemed to me a real possibility. Nonetheless, she said yes when I proposed, and we were married, with no family members present.

I called Mom the day after and told her. She apologized for what she'd said earlier. Ilene's parents were not so quick to alter their position. For months, the lines of communication were down. Sometimes I came home from work and found Ilene sitting on the couch crying.

Finally her parents agreed to see her, but not me. I drove her up to their house and waited in the car while she went in. As the hours passed, I seethed. At one point I started the engine and took off, but I didn't know the area and so, after circling the block, came back and parked again. When Ilene finally came out of the house, she just cried for nearly the entire return trip.

Today, people would rush to hold Ilene's parents guilty of racism.

But even when I was smoldering with resentment, I knew it wasn't that simple. These were good people—hard working, serious, upstanding. They were people, moreover, who had produced my wife, a person without a racist bone in her body. In a sense, I could sympathize with my new in-laws: there were no blacks in their daily life, and they lived in a small town where everyone knew everything about everyone else. Our marriage was a leap nothing in her parents' lives had prepared them to take.

But their reaction to me still rankled. After having to wait in the car that afternoon I vowed never to go near their house again.

For a long time we didn't see Ilene's parents. But we did see her Aunt Markeeta and Uncle Glen. They were wonderful people. Glen, dead now, was a salt-of-the-earth type who worked in a sawmill, and Markeeta had a personality as piquant as her name. They integrated us into their circle of friends, who became our friends too. In those healing days, we all functioned as an extended family.

If I had to pick the moment when our family problems began to resolve themselves it would be the day our son Marc was born.

Not long after, we were invited to come for a visit. This time I was included in the invitation. I remember sitting stiffly through the event, which had the tone of the recently released film, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?* I was supremely uncomfortable, but I also sensed that the fever had broken. And indeed, a peace process was in place. The visits became more frequent. The frigid tolerance gradually thawed into welcome.

There was no single dramatic moment that completed the reconciliation; no cathartic conversation in which we all explored our guilt and misconceptions. Instead, we just got on with our lives, nurturing the relationship that had been born along with my son. It grew faster than he did. Within a year we were on our way to becoming what we are now—a close-knit, supportive family. Today, my relationship with my in-laws could not be better. I love them very much, and they let me know that the feeling is mutual.

The moral is clear. Distance exaggerates difference and breeds mistrust; closeness breaks down suspicion and produces connection. My life so far tells me that our future as a nation is with connection.

MOST PEOPLE CALL ME A BLACK MAN. In fact, I'm black in the same way that Tiger Woods and so many other Americans are black—by the "one drop of blood" rule used by yesterday's segregationists and today's racial ideologues. In my case, the formula has more or less equal elements of French Canadian, Choctaw, African, and Irish American. But just reciting the fractions provides no insight about the richness of life produced by the sum of the parts.

A journalist for the *New York Times* once described my bloodline as being right out of a Faulkner novel. He was right. And my family was always trying to understand how the strands of DNA dangling down through history had created their individual selves. They had their share of guilty secrets and agonized over the consequences of bad blood, whatever its racial origin. But in their actions, they, like Faulkner's characters, treated race and other presumed borders between people as being permeable.

I grew up with my mother's people. My maternal grandfather was Eli Soniea, a mixed-blood Cajun born in the tiny Louisiana town of Sulphur. He eventually settled in Leesville, not far from the Texas border, a sleepy town with hazy foothills stretching behind it like a movie backdrop.

Eli died ten years before I was born, and I never knew him. But photographs of him have always intrigued me. He was light skinned, had straight black hair, and a serious look. I've been told he spoke a pidgin French and English and was an ambitious man. He worked as a carpenter, sometimes ran a construction gang, and amassed enough money to buy some land and build a restaurant and bar in Leesville. He was evidently a

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no-nonsense type who didn't like anyone, especially his own kin, putting on airs.

Eli's wife, my grandmother Mary Smith—or "Mom," as I always called her—was half Irish and half Choctaw. This latter element was clearly evident in her high cheekbones and broad features, and in the bloom of her young womanhood she was sometimes referred to as an "Indian Princess." Mom was born and raised in Texas. She married Eli Soniea as a result of an "arrangement" brokered by her parents, after which he brought her to Louisiana.

In their early life together, the two of them lived in that part of Leesville known as "Dago Quarters" because of the large number of Italian immigrants. After Eli's early death—when I was growing up you didn't ask why or how someone died; the mere fact of it ended all discussion—Mary's only income was from the restaurant and bar he had built, which she leased to people who did business with the servicemen from the nearby Army base. Because money was tight, she moved the family to a less expensive neighborhood, the predominantly black "Bartley Quarters."

The complexions of Mom's own six children ranged from light to dark. (William, for instance, was always known as "Red," because of his Indian look and coloring.) But whatever their exact coloration or facial characteristics, they all had "colored" on their birth certificates. In Louisiana in those days, being "colored" was not just a matter of blood; it was also a question of what neighborhood you lived in and what people you associated with. "Colored" is on my birth certificate.

The Sonieas' race problem came not only from whites but from blacks too. Leesville's social boundaries were reasonably porous, but if you were falling down through the cracks rather than moving up, as the Sonieas were doing after Eli died, you attracted notice. My grandmother often recalled how her new neighbors in Bartley Quarters called her and her children "high yellers," a term coined by white Southern racists but used with equal venom by blacks too. In fact, Mom's kids had so much trouble that officials tried to convince them to transfer out of the school to escape the racial animosity. This experience left some of my relatives with hard feelings that never really went away. During the campaign for California's Proposition 209, for instance, when I was being accused of selling out "my people," my Aunt Bert got annoyed one day and said, "When we lived back in Leesville, they didn't want to be our 'brothers and sisters'; they didn't own us as 'their people' then; so why do they think we owe them something now because of skin color?"

My biological mother Grace, Bert's little sister, was the youngest of Mom's children. I wish I had more memories of her. I have only one sharp image in my mind: a face resting in satin in a casket. Old photographs show my mother as a beautiful woman with a full, exotic face. But she wasn't beautiful lying there with a waxy, preserved look, certainly not to a terrified four-year-old dragged up to the front of the church to pay his last respects. I still remember standing there looking at her with my cousin Ora holding my hand to keep me from bolting as the pandemonium of a Southern black funeral—women yelling, crying, fainting, and lying palsied on the floor—rose to a crescendo all around me.

My father's unintended deathbed gift to me was the revelation that it is not the life we're given, but the life we make of the life we're given that counts.

ACCORDING TO FAMILY LEGEND, she died of a stroke. But I suspect that this claim was really just my family's way of explaining away something infinitely more complex. Two other facts about my mother's life may have had something to do with her early passing. First, she had been in a serious car accident that left her with a steel plate in her head. And secondly, she had been physically abused by my father.

I didn't find this out until I was in my fifties. The information accidentally escaped during a conversation with my Aunt Bert, who said, when the subject of my father came up, "You know, your Uncle Arthur once said, excuse the expression, 'That son of a bitch once took out a gun and shot at me!'"

I asked her why.

"Because Arthur told your father that if he ever beat your mother again he'd kill him, and your father got out a gun."

I guess Roy Connerly was what they called a "fancy man" back then. Judging from his photos, he was quite handsome, with light skin and a wicked smile, and a reputation as a gambler, a drinker, and a womanizer. He worked odd jobs, but it seems that his real profession was chasing women. I've been told so many times about the day he got tired of me and my mother and turned us in at my grandmother's house that it has come to feel like my own legitimate memory.

He arrived there one afternoon with the two of us and with his girlfriend of the moment, a woman named Lucy. My Aunt Bert was watering the lawn when he walked into the yard.

"Is Miss Mary here?" my father asked.

Bert said yes.

"Go get her," he ordered.

Bert went in to get Mom, who appeared on the porch wiping her hands on her apron.

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"I'm giving them back to you, Miss Mary," Roy said, gesturing at my sobbing mother and at me, the miserable child in her arms. "I want to be with Lucy."

Always composed in a crisis, Mom looked at him without visible emotion and said, "Thank you for bringing them."

A few days later he brought my red wagon over. Then Roy Connerly vanished from my life.

Later on I learned that Roy Connerly eventually got rid of Lucy and, at the age of 39, entered a relationship with a 15-year-old girl named Clementine and had a couple of kids by her. But nothing more than that for over 50 years. Then, just a couple of years ago, a writer doing a profile on me for the *New York Times* called one day.

"Are you sitting down?" he asked melodramatically.

I asked him what was up. He said that in his research about my background he had discovered that my father was still alive, 84 years old, and living in Leesville. The writer gave me his phone number.

I didn't do anything about it for a long time. Then, in the fall of 1998, I was invited to debate former Congressman William Gray at Tulane University in New Orleans. One of the things that made me accept was how close it was to Leesville. But I didn't actually decide to go there until after the speech. I came back to the hotel, rented a car, and got directions from the concierge.

It was a four-hour drive in a dreary rain. I warned myself not to surrender to counterfeit sentiment that would make a fool of both me and my father.

I stopped on the outskirts of town and called from a convenience store. My father's wife Clementine answered. I told her who I was and asked if I could come by and see him. There were muffled voices on the other end of the line, then she came back on and said that I should stay put and she'd send someone out to lead me to the house.

A few minutes later, a couple of young men in a beat-up blue car came by and motioned at me. I followed them down the main street and over railroad tracks to a run-down neighborhood of narrow houses and potholed roads without sidewalks.

We got out of the car and went into a tiny, shuttered house whose living room was illumined only by a small television set. I introduced myself to Clementine, and we talked about my father for a minute or two. She emphasized that the man I was about to meet was very old, quite ill, and easily confused.

When she led me into the bedroom, I saw him, sunk down in the mattress, a bag of bones. His hands and feet were gnarled and knobby with arthritis, but in his face I saw my own reflection.

I touched his arm: "How are you feeling today?"

He looked up at me uncomprehendingly: "All right."

"You know who I am?"

Seeing that he was lost in a fog, Clementine said, "It's Billy," using my childhood nickname. He looked at her, then at me.

"Oh, Billy," the voice was thin and wavering. "How long you're staying?"

I told him I couldn't stay long.

There was an awkward silence as I waited for him to say something. But he just stared at me. We looked at each other for what seemed like a very long time. Finally, a lifetime's worth of questions came tumbling out.

"Did you ever care how I was doing?" I asked him.

"No," he replied uncertainly.

"Did you ever try and get in touch with me?"

"No," he looked at me blankly.

"Did you ever even care what happened to me?"

"No."

At this point Clementine intervened: "I don't even think he knows what you're asking."

I stood there a moment, resigning myself to the situation. I would never get an explanation for his absence from my life. Then Joseph, one of the young men who'd guided me to the house and who I now realized was my half-brother, beckoned me out of the room. In the hallway, he asked if I'd like to visit some of my other relatives living nearby. I said yes and he took me outside. We crossed the street to a narrow house where an elderly woman was waiting for us. Joseph introduced her to me as my Aunt Ethel. She cordially invited us in.

Ethel had married my father's brother and served as the family's unofficial archivist and historian. As we talked, she asked if I knew anything about my father's family. I said no. Ethel showed me some photos. She told me that his mother, born in 1890, was named Fannie Self Conerly, and that they spelled it with one *n* then. She said that Fannie's mother was Sarah Ford Lovely, who had died at the age of 98, when I was a boy. This woman, my great-grandmother, had been born a slave.

After I walked back to my father's house and sat for a while beside him, I stood and said, "I've got to be going. You take care of yourself."

"You too," he said to me. "You ever coming back this way again, Billy?"

I smiled and waved and left without answering, and without asking him the one question that was still on my mind: Did you beat my mother like they say? Did you hasten her death and thus deprive me of both of you?

On the drive back to New Orleans I thought about my discoveries—this sickly old man who was my life's most intimate stranger; the fact that his blood and mine had once been owned by another human being. I felt subtly altered, but still the same. My father's gift to me, if you could call it that, was a deeper realization that it is not the life we're given that counts, but the life we make of the life we're given.

IT IS MALICIOUS AS WELL AS UNREASONABLE NOT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE CONDITIONS FOR BLACK ANGER HAVE DIMINISHED.

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MOONSTRUCK

A Chat with

Novelist Thomas Mallon

By Bill Kauffman

Illustration by Ralph Butler

FRESH FROM *THE SCARLET LETTER,* Nathaniel Hawthorne composed a campaign hagiography for presidential candidate Franklin Pierce, his old Bowdoin classmate. So it ought not startle us that Thomas Mallon—who has emerged in the last decade as one of the finer American novelists—earlier "assisted" Dan Quayle in the writing of his mortal memoir *Standing Firm.*

Mallon published his first novel, *Arts and Sciences,* in 1988, but he has really hit his stride with three consecutive historical novels: *Henry and Clara, Dewey Defeats Truman,* and the just-published *Two Moons.* His new novel combines Mallon's signature thematic concerns—political history, astronomy, and the mysteries of sublunary romance. Set in the Washington, D.C., of 1877, when civil service reform was in the air and two newly discovered orbs—the Martian moons Phobos and Deimos—were in the sky, *Two Moons* revivifies one of the gargantuan rascals of Gilded Age America, Senator Roscoe Conkling of New York.

I chatted with Thomas Mallon in Washington in his room at the Jefferson Hotel. He was just beginning his book tour, but already missing his home in Connecticut.

KAUFFMAN: Is there anyone in today's politics who is even remotely as outsized and flamboyant as the leonine dandy from Utica, Roscoe Conkling?

MALLON: There's such a premium on blandness today. You're not allowed to have outsized characteristics. Very few people are allowed to be eccentric in politics. The media will let somebody go as far as Alan Simpson.

One of the things that's so awful about Clinton is that we have all sorts of evidence about what a big, juicy creature of appetites he is, but he's always presenting himself in this awful cowl of socially acceptable, politically correct demeanor.

One thing that diminishes politicians today is that they don't use the language as well as nineteenth-century politicians used it. If you read the ordinary correspondence of nineteenth-century politicians, they can be writing about a post office appointment in Troy, New York, but the letter has a much more natural use of language.

The ordinary person uses language less well now than the ordinary person did 100 years ago. And it diminishes you in a very fundamental way. You rely on everything else—television, computer—for your own perceptions, and you're not called upon to interpret things.

TAE *associate editor Bill Kauffman's books include the novel* Every Man a King *and* America First! Its History, Culture, and Politics.

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People generally are becoming less like themselves as the years go by, or less like what they could be because they don't use language with the subtlety and vigor that they used to.

KAUFFMAN: Civil service reform is certainly an undervisited subject in American fiction.

MALLON: People say, "When is your novel set?" and I tell them, "In the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes"—they practically start snoring. But the Hayes administration was a thrill a minute.

Civil service reform, which sounds so dry, does have its gripping aspects, because so much depended on the outcome. Conkling's entire machine is built on his ability to control the Customs House in New York. Civil service is coming in at the same time that Washington is becoming a modern city: it's going to change the way people live.

KAUFFMAN: You give the anti-reformers a very fair shake. Roscoe Conkling decries the "rancid, canting, self-righteousness" of the reformers, whose "real object is office and plunder." We are in the midst of the John McCain moment. Any parallels?

MALLON: (Laughing) You think campaign-finance reform is an issue now, go back then!

Reformers often fall into self-righteousness because they have such certainty that they're standing on the moral high ground. I'll give you a parallel.

Conkling refuses to apologize for being at the gears of this powerful Republican Party machine. His view is, "I'm a Republican; we kept the Union together. I was part of this massive effort which saved the country, and now I'm being pecked to death over niceties by people who have done much less good ultimately than I and my kind did."

Today, you see certain mainstream Republicans who think, "All we did was force the Soviet's hand and win the Cold War and completely redo the world, and we're listening to all of this nonsense." What nobody points out in the current debate is that this terrible, atrocious system that we're living with now *is* the reform system.

Is there anybody who would seriously argue that the reformed nominating system that we've had in place for the last 30 years has given us better candidates for President than the old conventions driven by the party elders used to give?

KAUFFMAN: My fear is that if I wrote an historical novel some figure from that period would time-travel to the present, read the book, and snigger, "Oh, no, this is all wrong. That's not how it was." If ever you had such a fear, obviously you've conquered it.

MALLON: It's easy to catch mistakes in the idiom, just in the process of revision. But what you might fall into more easily is having somebody's psychology or ethics be more modern than they would be.

KAUFFMAN: Yes, for instance there's a tendency today to give the hero—almost always the heroine—contemporary racial attitudes.

MALLON: Right. She's so much in advance of her time. If only everybody else could be as enlightened. She's showing the way. My friend Richard Bausch, a novelist, says that every character today must represent the highest aspirations of his victim group—whether it's historical or not.

KAUFFMAN: It's one thing to show a fictional character engaging in base behavior. But what are the ethics of depicting an actual figure, Senator Conkling, acting despicably towards a woman who exists only in your imagination?

MALLON: Somebody once asked me, "Don't you fear the dead?" They asked me this vis-à-vis Major Rathbone, who was in *Henry and Clara*, and who I have being momentarily complicit in the Lincoln assassination. That novel hinges on Henry Rathbone's actually seeing Booth come into the box, and, however momentarily, making a conscious decision not to stop him.

That's probably a terrible libel on the dead. With Conkling, I think I'm true to the tenor of his private life. He was a big womanizer. Julia, the long-suffering Mrs. Conkling, was always up in Utica, and there were a lot of women, most famously Kate Chase Sprague, who was the Chief Justice's daughter. If anything, I have toned Conkling down. Conkling is just one of these day-glow figures. He had everything he needed: the looks of a Kennedy, the eloquence of Mario Cuomo, and the ethics of Al D'Amato.

If Conkling were purely a moustache-twirling villain, he wouldn't be very interesting. Conkling had these lapses into statesmanship every so often. The day Senator Bruce, the black senator from Mississippi, was sworn in, and his colleagues were trying to hide behind their newspapers, Conkling strode across the floor and shook his hand and shamed them into welcoming him into the Senate. Senator Bruce named his first child Roscoe Conkling Bruce.

Unfortunately, the other most famous namesake for Roscoe Conkling is Fatty Arbuckle, the actor. His father suspected that Fatty was actually the product of an affair, and he was such a rabid Democrat that he thought the worst thing he could do to curse this bastard child was to give him Roscoe Conkling's name.

KAUFFMAN: So you've not been haunted by the ghost of the astronomy popularizer Simon Newcomb, the Carl Sagan of his day, who in *Two Moons* comes off as a vain, self-absorbed, pompous grasper?

MALLON: Newcomb was a great showboat. And he did attempt to grab credit for the discovery of the two moons of Mars from Asaph Hall, the real discoverer.

It's very modern in a way: When the reporters got wind of the discovery and came out to the Naval Observatory to talk about it, the one name on their Rolodex, or whatever they had instead of a Rolodex, was Simon Newcomb. And he framed his account in a way that reflected more credit on himself than he was entitled to.

KAUFFMAN: There's obviously an unslaked thirst among American readers and viewers for books and movies about the American past, yet comparatively few are written or produced.

MALLON: There is something of a revival of historical fiction going on. You have to credit the irascible Gore Vidal, who rescued the genre from a white-elephant place in literature.

I have a theory that this revival also has to do with the communications revolution. The past is about the only place to which you can get away any longer. Everybody is instantly, totally accessible to everybody else at every given moment. We could get Katmandu on the phone in 10 seconds. People take their cell phones up Mt. Everest. The past is starting to look imaginatively attractive to novelists now, the way geographical distance or different life circumstances might have been earlier.

I think that novelists are going to be concentrating more on the past then they used to. The allegorical possibilities are always there. The challenge is to not have a lead foot on that particular pedal:Let the allegorical connections arise by themselves

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without pushing and nudging and winking too much.

KAUFFMAN: Your novels tend to be about bystanders, people whose lives briefly touch those of great men. Why do the bystanders interest you more than the Deweys or the Lincolns?

MALLON: I remember when I was 12, when Kennedy was killed, there was a photograph of the assassination, not the gory Zapruder film but a photograph taken from the front by an Associated Press photographer. It's taken the moment of the first shot. You can actually see Kennedy reaching up to his throat.

The people on the sidewalk fascinated me because they were still smiling. They didn't realize what had happened. I would think about those minor characters.

KAUFFMAN: You ghosted Dan Quayle's memoir, *Standing Firm*, did you not? The acknowledgements say "Tom Mallon....provided a great deal of help," which is celebrity author-speak for "He wrote it."

MALLON: I'm just going to say I did a lot of work on the book, and leave it go at that. Dan Quayle is an extremely nice guy, and he remains a good friend and was unfailingly courteous to me whenever I did anything on the book.

KAUFFMAN: Did you learn anything from Quayle that you later put to use in your historical fiction? I mean, working side-by-side with the Vice President of the United States...

MALLON: It's a fair question but I'm just going to duck it.

KAUFFMAN: I gather that you are gay. Quayle identified himself with the family-values Right. Was that ever an issue?

MALLON: No. I voted for George Bush twice, which means I voted for Dan Quayle twice. I am not a social-issues Republican. I'm not even a registered Republican. I'm attracted to a lot of conservative positions, but on most social issue questions I would be much more libertarian than Dan Quayle.

On the other hand, I write for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *The New Yorker*, and I disagree with far more of their editorial positions than I do with the positions of Dan Quayle.

KAUFFMAN: Can you imagine writing a novel with Quayle as a character?

MALLON: (Pause) I wouldn't, because he's a figure of the present and I just write about the past.

KAUFFMAN: Have your politics ever been a disadvantage in the world of New York publishing?

MALLON: I honestly can't say so. My politics are very mainstream conservative with a libertarian streak. As the years go on, I find Barry Goldwater more and more attractive.

What's odd is that what are fairly mainstream positions in the rest of the country are somewhat unusual in New York. If you think of supposed "literary novelists" who are also somewhat conservative, it's me and Mark Helprin—that's the shooting match. But my interest in politics and history trumps ideology in a lot of ways. If I had been asked to work on a book with a Democratic Vice President, I wouldn't be a bit surprised if I would have said yes.

This gets back to the whole question of the paucity of historical fiction. I don't think the average American writer gets out enough. You have this superabundance of academic novels by novelists who spend their daytime teaching writing. We were much better off when we had more newspapermen who were novelists. They saw more and they were more engaged in their times.

KAUFFMAN: You've said that as a boy the two greatest influences on your imagination were "the Catholic Church and Project Mercury." Do they remain so as an adult?

MALLON: More specifically, it was the Baltimore Catechism and Project Mercury. Certainly astronomy always comes into my books, and I'm still a passionate believer in manned space travel.

It's colossally crazy that we reached the year 2000 having gone nowhere in the previous 30 years. We should have been to Mars and back several times now.

KAUFFMAN: Are you for or against the colonization or possibly even terraforming of Mars?

MALLON: For it. Completely.

KAUFFMAN: An Earth imperialist!

MALLON: Speciesism! As far as the Baltimore Catechism goes, I suppose "lapsed Catholic" is the right description.

KAUFFMAN: You're not a church-goer?

MALLON: I'm not a church-goer, no, which is a very different matter from being a believer.

KAUFFMAN: So you're a believer?

MALLON: I'm spiritually ill-developed. My interest in astronomy is probably some kind of spiritual displacement.

KAUFFMAN: Your last two novels feature astronomers or astronomy buffs, another group largely absent from fiction. Why so few novels about scientists?

MALLON: From the demand side, it frightens readers off. I remember talking about trigonometry in a radio interview. I felt like seizing the microphone to tell anyone who was listening, "There's really not a lot of math in this novel!"

A lot of it also gets displaced into science fiction. Maybe to some novelists it is tainted by that.

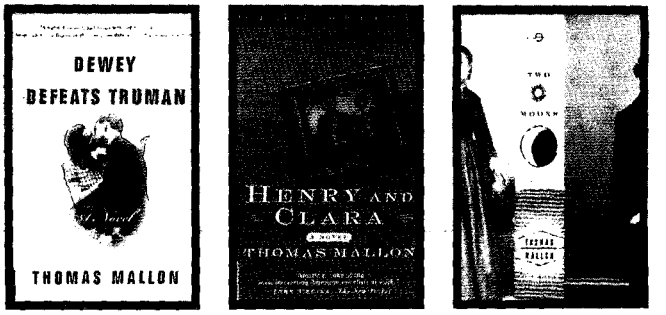
My scientific knowledge is really rudimentary. I entered Brown in the fall of 1969, just after Ira Magaziner had largely rewritten the curriculum and made everything Pass/Fail, with no distribution requirements.

I should have been forced to take science. I would have been a lot better off for it. I remember when Magaziner came to the White House in '93 and put the health plan together. I told a friend, "Stock up on aspirin and gauze."

As I take my leave of Mallon, we talk astronomy. He has a four-inch Celestron telescope, which is far too small to offer a glimpse of the Martian moons Phobos and Deimos. But perhaps they are better imagined anyway.

Having given Rutherford B. Hayes his due, Mallon says that in his next novel the characters will glance off a President even more deserving of rehabilitation: Calvin Coolidge.

BOOKS BY THOMAS MALLON



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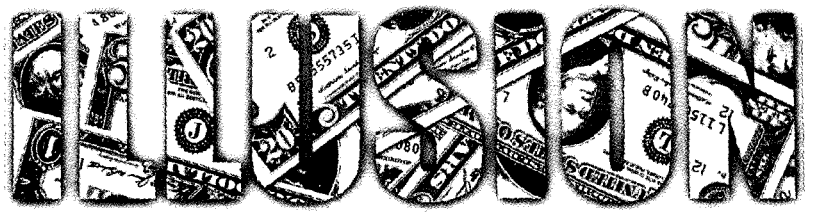
End of An 

The Kansas City experiment should put a stop to the idea that too little money is what ails bad schools

BY BLAKE HURST

The longest running and most expensive experiment in the history of U.S. public education is coming to a close: The Missouri State Board of Education has pulled the accreditation of the Kansas City School District, and the school district cannot survive in its present form.

In 1985, a federal judge named Russell Clark took the Kansas City School District completely under his control, as a result of a desegregation suit filed in the late 1970s. Judge Clark found the district and state jointly liable for past discrimination, and embarked upon a unique and hugely expensive remedy. Instead of busing in children from neighboring districts, he ordered the Kansas City schools to fund a series of magnet schools that would be so wonderful as to attract non-minority students voluntarily. (See *TAE* May/June 1995, pages 52-56.)

As a result, the state poured nearly $2 billion into building the most lavish school infrastructure in the nation. The district now spends more per pupil than any other urban district in America and has a student-teacher ratio under 13 to 1, the lowest in the nation. Included in the 15 new schools built in the district are a 25-acre wildlife sanctuary, a model United Nations with simultaneous translation facilities, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, and a robotics lab. At the height of the spending orgy, 44 percent of Missouri's total budget for elementary and secondary schools was going to St. Louis and Kansas City, even though the two cities enroll only 9 percent of the state's students.

Though transportation was not a problem (the district would send a taxi for any suburban students who didn't live near a bus route), the added amenities were not enough to attract white students from surrounding suburbs. The former Soviet Olympic fencing coach was simply not a sufficient draw, and even the chance to learn French from French-speaking natives of Quebec, Belgium, and Cameroon failed to increase white enrollment.

More importantly, test scores remained abysmal. In the most recent results from the Iowa Basic Skills Test, Kansas City students in the third, fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades scored well below the national average. In the ACT (the college entrance exam taken by most Midwestern students), Kansas City students earned an average score of 16.9—while 36 is perfect, and the national average is 21. Statewide, the average black student scored 17.9. When Kansas City students took Missouri's new statewide assessment tests, only 5 percent of black eleventh-graders in the district scored at a "proficient" level in reading and writing. Nearly half the black students in the district either didn't finish the assessment test, or failed to show up at all.

The district's apologists have launched all the usual rationalizations. Arthur Benson, the attorney who helped spearhead the Kansas City desegregation case, discounted the horrendous test results, insisting that any standardized exam "tests a very narrow range of low-level skills like vocabulary and rudimentary math. It doesn't test anything important like understanding, the ability to think and solve problems, the ability to express oneself in complex thoughts." Apparently believing that even complex thoughts begin with good vocabulary and basic math, the state of Missouri ignored Mr. Benson and pulled the district accreditation.

In 1994, the Missouri legislature passed, and Governor Mel Carnahan signed into law, a program they promised would improve Missouri schools. The bill raised taxes dramatically, stiffened requirements for teachers and curriculum, and included a program to evaluate school district's performance on statewide tests in order to achieve state accreditation. There were immediate, iron requirements for certified teachers, curriculum plans, and extra staffing that caused several school districts to lose accreditation as a result, including the rural district that my children attended (see *TAE* March/April 1995, page 75).

But while the axe fell quickly on schools that didn't sharply increase their inputs and spending, the state Department of Education has been much slower to penalize schools for poor student performance. In an interview last year, the department reported that no schools had been found wanting. Five years after the Missouri School Improvement Act became law, it wasn't clear that it had been anything but a huge payoff to the teachers' groups that supported Democrat Carnahan's election.

But with Missouri Education Commissioner Bob Bartman and the State Board of Education pulling Kansas City's accreditation this spring, for failing to meet *any* of the 11 performance standards in the latest review, perhaps that cynicism was misplaced. Bartman spent a year as a platoon commander in Vietnam, and that experience will serve him well in the political and legal firestorm that is now following his decision.

At this point, the school district has two years to meet the requirements for accreditation. If it fails, the state will assume control of the district, and the district can be split or merged into neighboring districts. But as soon as the state certificate is pulled on May 1 of 2000, district students can legally begin leaving the district for neighboring districts. The Kansas City school district must not only pay the tuition for transferring students, but also their transportation costs. That is a neutron bomb dropped on the K.C. schools. Their lavish buildings will remain, but many of their students may be gone.

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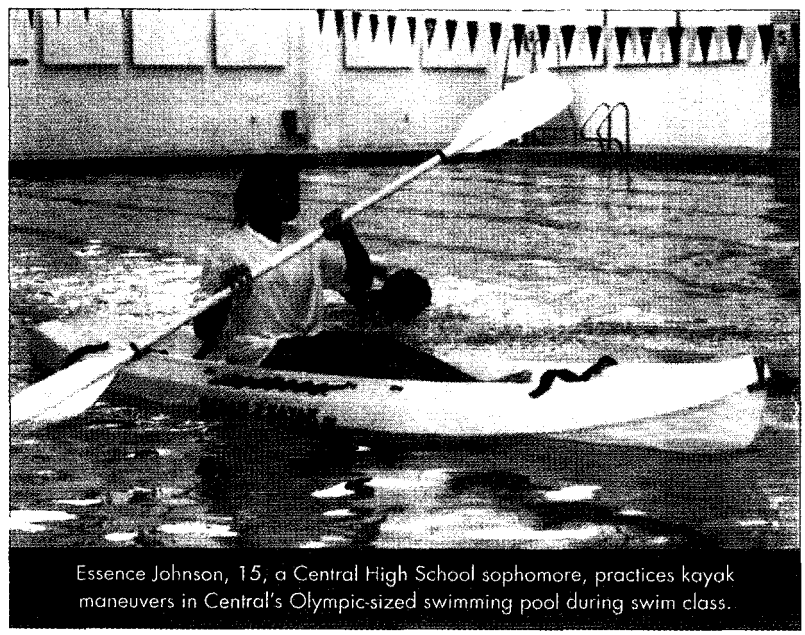
Needless to say, the district immediately appealed the decision to Federal District Judge Dean Whipple, the successor to Judge Clark in the desegregation case. Judge Whipple not only refused to disallow the state action, but in a surprise move, he ended the desegregation case completely. The school district, at least for a few months, was free of court control. In the language of the day, Whipple made it clear that he would no longer serve as enabler to the school district's addiction to spending state money without improving student performance.

Alas, the Eighth District Court of Appeals couldn't keep their hands off Judge Whipple's decision, and in February they reinstated federal control. They not only resumed court oversight of the schools but, in a less-than-judicial snit, fired Whipple as the judge in charge of the case. And in the most disturbing part of the decision, they made it clear they would be amenable to overturning the state's accreditation ruling if asked.

Education costs come in "lumps." Once the infrastructure for a school is in place and the teachers and administrators are hired, the marginal cost of an additional student is extremely low. The immediate reaction of adjoining school districts to Kansas City's loss of accreditation was muted, but chances are, they will accept as many of the K.C. students as they possibly can, because it is in their financial interests to do so. The district is home to 15 charter schools, and they are already reporting phone calls from parents inquiring about openings. Another 20 charter schools are being considered, and if the new charter schools are opened, the competition between the charter schools in the district and existing nearby schools will improve education for every student in the Kansas City area. The *Kansas City Star* reports that even the president of the Kansas City school board is considering removing his children from the school district.



Essence Johnson, 15, a Central High School sophomore, practices kayak maneuvers in Central's Olympic-sized swimming pool during swim class.

The Kansas City district will find it difficult to cut costs as their students leave. Though the district is home to slightly over 30,000 students, the loss of just a few thousand of those students could force the district into extreme financial difficulty. Unless accreditation is restored, it is unlikely the district will survive.

With their monopoly threatened, the school board, teachers' union, school administration, and desegregation monitoring committee are up in arms. Spokesmen for these groups have pleaded with the state school board and Judge Whipple to "consider the children." But when only 5 percent of black eleventh graders in a given system can read and write proficiently, despite billions of dollars worth of court-ordered extra spending, that system's promises to do better should be treated with contempt.

The state of the Kansas City schools has national implications. Judge Clark invited the school district to "dream" when the district submitted its plans, over 20 years ago, to remedy past discrimination. The judge and the taxpayers of Missouri fulfilled those dreams. Yet the result has been nothing less than a nightmare. The lesson is clear: Even unlimited funds do not in themselves produce good education.

Until the unfortunate intervention of the appeals court, the Missouri Board of Education, Commissioner Bartman, and Judge Whipple had shown the courage needed to act upon that lesson. They began to demand real improvements in student performance. If Judge Clark had tied his initial billions of spending to measures of performance, today's mess could have been avoided.

Failure should have a price. If the Eighth District Court ultimately blocks Kansas City's loss of accreditation, the school district will lack any incentive to improve. Already, in the few short months since the State Board acted, observers of the district have noticed impressive changes. To quote Commissioner Bartman, "nothing improves your focus like a walk to the gallows." As soon as the appeals court intervened, however, the actors in this never-ending drama began to return to type. The teachers' union is complaining about a merit pay plan. The opponents of charter schools are arguing for a five-year delay in the opening of any new ones. The school board has resumed its racial and ideological bickering.

No improvement will ever occur without strict accountability, no matter how many billions are poured into Kansas City's gilded classrooms. Happily, there is an easily attainable alternative to the decades of overspending, half-baked educational theories imposed from above by a federal judge, and penalty-free incompetence of the local schools. All that's necessary is competition between whatever remains of the Kansas City School District and the local charter schools, private schools, and neighboring public school districts. If the judges in their wisdom will only allow that, a good education for the children of Missouri's second-largest city could be just around the corner.

TAE *contributing writer Blake Hurst is former president of Westboro School District in northwest Missouri.*

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Transcript

WORDS WORTH REPEATING

FANNING REAL DESIRE

The following remarks are excerpted from a recent American Enterprise Institute discussion of Wing to Wing, Oar to Oar, *a new anthology of "readings on courting and marrying" by authors ranging from Homer to Tolstoy to Miss Manners. Christina Hoff Sommers of AEI moderated.*

CHRISTINA HOFF SOMMERS: This book is a response to the antiromantic roar against courtship, marriage, and family life in contemporary American society. Our speakers are the book's editors, Amy and Leon Kass, professors at the University of Chicago; Judith Martin, author most recently of *Miss Manners' Guide to Domestic Tranquility*; David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values; and Amy Holmes, a policy analyst at the Independent Women's Forum.

AMY KASS: The time has come to offer real help to the romantically perplexed, to pursue a revival of courtship—romance that seeks and leads to marriage. Lest you think us quixotic, here are our reasons. First, we recognize marriage's unique opportunity for erotic fulfillment, deep friendship, lifelong intimacy, and personal growth, as well as its indispensable contributions to children's well-being.

Second, we believe good marriages depend on good choices, choices likely to be better if they are prepared by a pattern of romance that, from the start, aspires to marriage as its lasting home. Third, despite numerous obstacles to the revival of courtship, including discouraging evidence about the state of romance, we think the time is ripe for a sexual counterrevolution.

More and more people, especially young women, are admitting their personal unhappiness with, and looking for alternatives to, the "hook-up" culture.

For all the talk about family values and the breakup of marriages, little attention is paid to what makes for marital success. The courting customs for entering into marriage have disappeared, with no new cultural forms to replace them, and so the path to the altar has become uncharted territory.

In earlier days, courtship took erotic love of man and woman as its starting point, but mindful of both the perils and promise of sexual desire and erotic aspiration, it sought to discipline love. When courtship worked well, it provided ample opportunity to discover how good a match this was likely to be. It provided practice in being married—a very different kind of practice from that provided by premarital cohabitation, which is characterized by high personal autonomy and low personal commitment, preparing one only for transient and conditional attachment, not lasting marriage.

Numerous circumstances now hinder a revival of romance: Casual and loveless sex, preoccupations with careers, diminished regard for marriage, fear of intimacy and the vulnerabilities of giving your heart, lack of trust in anyone but yourself, the deeply discouraging examples of divorced parents, and the cynical, academic theories that see all human relations in terms of money and power and that redefine sex as a "cultural construction" aimed at control.

In the college class on courtship we currently teach, we've heard many dismaying opinions:

• "The thought of living with the same person for 50 years is simply incredible."

• "We are not supposed to get married until we are 28; so we know from the beginning of all of our sexual relationships that they are supposed to be impermanent."

• "Though we're living together, we know we will split when we graduate, but we'll say, 'thanks for the experience.'"

• "Casual sex with lots of men gets the sex thing out of the way so that it is now possible for women as never before to get to know men as friends."

Listening to such talk among current students, and having watched our former students over 25 years, well beyond their college days, fumble along from one unsatisfactory relationship to the next, becoming jaded and embittered, we might be expected simply to toss in the towel.

Yet beneath the student's self-protecting cynicism are real longings for friendship, for wholeness, for a life that is serious and deep, and for associations that are trustworthy and lasting—longings that students do not yet realize could be satisfied by marrying well.

The young are mainly just scared; no one has offered them hope or proper guidance. They need a real sex education, one aiming higher than the prevention of pregnancy and disease. By inspiring the imagination with images of beauty and speeches of dignity, it would prepare hearts and minds for romance, leading to lasting marriage.

We want young people to become more thoughtful about what sex means, what love seeks, and what marriage can be like. We want them to learn how to read character and to distinguish the dependable, long-distance runners from the flashy sprinters. We want people to concentrate less on safe sex and more on adventurous love, and especially on the prospects for love-filled, lasting union.

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All these purposes are well served by grappling with wise thoughts of deep thinkers. Instead of Seinfeld or Ally McBeal, we offer Shakespeare's Orlando and Rosalind, Rousseau's Sophie and Emile, Jane Austen's Darcy and Elizabeth, Tolstoy's Pierre and Natasha.

We invite people to ponder why Adam and Eve, when their eyes were open, covered their nakedness; whether modesty helps transform lust into love; what Socrates means when he says that love is of immortality; what Kierkegaard means when he says absolute faith in marriage is the only attribute that makes a man lovable; why Miss Manners claims the real skill in courtship is to be able to play just slightly more slowly than one's partner; why C.S. Lewis thinks Eros cannot deliver what it promises, without the promises of marriage. And what Robert Frost means in suggesting to his daughter and her groom that "Two such as you with such a master speed / Cannot be parted nor be swept away / From one another once you are agreed / That life is only life forevermore / Together wing to wing and oar to oar."

One final observation: All the profound students of the relations between men and women have noticed that power in these matters belongs largely to women. Men make advances, women offer resistance, plus the promise of yielding should the man prove worthy. This a woman does not because she is sexually repressed but because it is marriage she is after.

The question is whether most women can rediscover that a fulfilling marriage and motherhood are essential to their happiness. If so, they might again be willing as a group to exercise more sexual restraint and to eschew cohabitation, compelling men to court them and to demonstrate that they are worthy of their affectionate embrace.

DAVID BLANKENHORN: The English writer Malcolm Muggeridge said in the 1960s, "We're entering into a hothouse period in sexual relationships where the primary idea will be the celebration of desire as such." But, he added, this can't last. Once you strip away the sense of larger meaning, desire becomes twisted and weak, and ultimately dies.

And now along come these two college professors who say to us, "Gee, you say you want it all? I wish you *did* want it all. I wish you knew what 'it all' really looked like. You want desire? Let me tell you about desire."

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SCARED; NO ONE HAS OFFERED THEM A PROPER SEX EDUCATION AIMING AT TRUE ROMANCE.

Maybe I'm too optimistic, but I suspect the hothouse period is waning.

AMY HOLMES: I look at the cover and read, "Courtship and Marriage," and I can only think: 'I've heard they're nice things.'" (Laughter)

The Kasses have produced an important book, particularly for young women, many of whom find ourselves trapped in an era of sexual nihilism without commitment, of marriage without permanence.

We're steeped in information on intercourse and reproduction and contraception and plays like *The Vagina Monologues*, all of which seek to destroy the mystery and awe of sex and the female body. But we know little about the relationship of sex, courtship, and marriage to life, family, and community. The Kasses' book has a passage that speaks to this: "Shameless times, if there are any, are periods of destruction. So are times without any kind of awe. But in such times, shame and awe are present by their very absence as need and want in human hearts."

JUDITH MARTIN: I don't agree that people have forsaken romance. They may have twisted it into odd shapes, but this is a time when professional people will spend a year or two working on a wedding. It's all wrapped in this yearning for a package of romance with white tulle and lace.

I'm never quite for going backwards. So, what can society do? One thing is to have patterns people can follow without having to improvise all the time, which is a disaster.

Take people who write their own wedding vows. I told my children, after we went to a wedding like that, "When you marry, you'll have all kinds of thoughts about romance, marriage, and each other. Just remember one thing: Nobody wants to hear them." (Laughter)

We have made some advances, and I think we should keep those. But we desperately need standardized patterns people can follow, even that they can rebel against. You can't rebel against something unless it's there.

LEON KASS: Neither Amy nor I want to turn back the clock. The situation of women in the world is different than it was. We are trying to encourage people to trust the deep longings they have for real intimacy, for being taken seriously by another human being.

QUESTION: Does the universal acceptance of contraception hinder people from reaching this understanding of marriage?

AMY KASS: The separation of sex and love is certainly made possible with the help of contraception, and I think it's the source of many of our problems. That's not to say I would like life without contraception to come back.

LEON KASS: Whatever the practical merits of contraception, and I don't disagree with Amy about this, one should understand that its institution is an assertion of the will against the promptings of nature and the heart. Children are now a choice rather than a gift, which produces a different attitude toward the other sex, toward what new life is.

QUESTION: In our culture we have the idea that the love between the man and the woman is sufficient, but in fact there's only one unconditional lover: God. Can you bring back respect for marriage without that aspect?

LEON KASS: I'm not sure it can be done simply on a secular basis. On the other hand, this society is pluralistic. People worship in different ways. Many people are unaffiliated, and one can't simply abandon them.

AMY KASS: In the book we present both possibilities, and we don't decide, precisely because so many people we know come from a completely secular background. They would be even less interested in marriage if you said it had any connection with religion. The argument has to be made from both sides.

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A GRINDSTONE TRIUMPH

By Blake Hurst

TARKIO, MISSOURI—The phone rang Friday night, at about midnight. No parent sleeps easy once his children are old enough to drive, and a late-night phone call can make your heart stop. I restarted mine, rolled over to the night stand, and with no little trepidation, answered the phone.

It was Ann, our daughter, a sophomore at the University of Missouri, and she was in tears. She had taken a job at the start of this semester with a chain restaurant called "Steak and Shake." The term "steak" here being used rather loosely, because their steaks closely resemble hamburgers, but you do get real silverware, and a waitress does come to your table, and if you stopped in Columbia, Missouri, in January, that waitress might have been Ann. She was heartbroken, and in between sobs, I managed to piece together her tale of service industry woe. As near as I could tell, she had made a mistake at the cash register, and a coworker had yelled at her. Not only that, but her feet hurt and she didn't get any tables to wait on; so she was working for $2.50 an hour without tips. To top it all off, she had had to work a half-hour past the end of her shift.

A parenting crisis indeed. Made worse by the fact that her employment at Steak and Shake is a direct result of some rather pointed comments by her father. Ann has been an intern for a U.S. Congressman, an intern for a U.S. Senator, and an intern for a state-wide lobbying organization. The first two internships were unpaid, and the last paid about $4 an hour. Her mother and I approved of these opportunities and know that the experience and friends she made will be invaluable in her career, as she is planning on changing the world within just a few years of graduation. But college is expensive, and we thought higher wages might be in order. Not only that, but Ann, over Christmas break, had given the impression that she would settle for nothing less than an executive position, and we told her the average executive search firm is not looking for college sophomores. I thought the experience of hard, demanding work would be good no matter where her career takes her, and when she writes the obligatory campaign biography, the fact that she worked her way through college waiting tables should be worth thousands of votes.

This parenting crisis should have been an easy call for me. I've spent the last ten years employing people in entry-level positions, and complaining about their mistakes, their unwillingness to work, and the overall decline in the work ethic. Here was my chance to strike a blow for hard work, and fulfilling commitments, by giving Ann a "keep your nose to the grindstone" speech. Of course, I immediately began calculating when I would have to leave home in order to be in Columbia when Steak and Shake opened, so I could visit the wrath of an enraged father upon the manager, employees, and any customers who weren't tipping at least 20 percent.

When my wife, Julie, and I embarked upon this journey as parents with the birth of our first child, I was at least vaguely aware that I would be responsible for my children's morals, deportment, and safety. I knew I would have to save for their education and work hard to provide for their needs. But the hardest part of being a parent is letting go. Letting the kids fight their own battles, make their own decisions, and grow with just the right amount of direction, but without protecting them so much that they can't deal with life on their own. Julie and I listened to Ann, and encouraged her, and sent her flowers, and assured her that her job would get easier.

When Ann called back the next evening, things had improved. She had earned $30 in tips, bought a pair of comfortable shoes, and wrestled the cash register into submission. I've always been proud of all three of my children, and I was proud when Ann was selected for her job with Senator Ashcroft, and I'm proud of her academic record, but I've never been as proud as that telephone call made me.

A week later, Ann called again with the news that she had scheduled an interview with a bank that was looking for help. She is now happily employed as a teller, and seems to be enjoying her new job a great deal. She was worried that she was not fulfilling her commitment to Steak and Shake, but an exit interview with her supervisor left little doubt that he felt her future lay somewhere, anywhere besides the food service industry.

I'm glad Ann is happy in her new employment, ecstatic that she is contributing to the college fund, and resigned to the fact that after countless generations of family members who earned their living working with their hands, the Hursts have finally spawned someone destined to work in a suit instead of overalls.

Corn farmer and greenhouseman Blake Hurst is a TAE *contributing writer.*

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Casino Tries to Squash Property Owner

By Dana Berliner

Corporate welfare is taking a new and alarming turn. You thought it was bad enough that your state and local government occasionally took your money to give it to favored private businesses. Lately, however, many state and local governments have gone even further by actually condemning private homes and businesses to give that land to politically connected private companies—including, preposterously, casinos.

The U.S. Constitution permits government entities to condemn land under two conditions: the property must be for a "public use," and "just compensation" must be paid. Courts originally understood this "eminent domain" principle the way an ordinary person would after reading the Constitution: The condemnation of property had to be necessary for the project; the government couldn't take land it didn't really need. And of course, property could not be taken from one private party and given to another private party, because that obviously wasn't a "public" use. Under this legal framework, eminent domain was used for such projects as roads, railroads, and sewer systems. That all changed in the middle of this century. Now thanks to a series of court decisions from the 1950s to the 1980s, city officials feel free to help themselves to citizens' property, then give it to their friends as part of favorable financing deals.

I first became aware of this trend when I began working on a case in Atlantic City several years ago. The "Casino Reinvestment Development Authority," a New Jersey agency created for the purpose of fostering casino development, tried to condemn the home of an elderly widow, Vera Coking, so that the Trump Plaza Casino Hotel could have a limousine waiting area across the street. In the end, it turned out that the agreement between Trump and the agency did not even limit the use of the property to parking—Trump could choose to use it for further casino expansion. In 1998, a New Jersey judge rejected this attempt to give Trump a "blank check" to the home of this 36-year resident.

Another elderly long-term Atlantic City resident was less fortunate. Lillian Bryant lived in the last middle-class African-American neighborhood in Atlantic City, on a street named after her father. Her home, and indeed her entire neighborhood, was condemned so the city could construct a road to service Steve Wynn's new casino. The city rejected suggestions that it use an alternate route that would not have destroyed these homes.

Casinos seem particularly interested in enlisting government's eminent domain power, and local governments have been only too willing to oblige. Now, Detroit is in the process of condemning long-term (some over 100 years) industrial and retail businesses down by the waterfront for casinos financed by public bonds. The casino project shows the type of blatant misuse of the eminent domain power to obtain discount prices that the Constitution forbids when it mandates "just compensation." The city and the developer actually refused to negotiate with the property owners for a voluntary purchase at a fair price, preferring instead to take the land by force. Condemned businesses are much cheaper than those acquired on the open market, because the owner is only compensated for the property, not the value of the business—something that *is* part of the negotiated price in a voluntary sale. Thus, what should have been an ordinary purchase will instead be a coerced action against business owners who have stuck with Detroit for many years.

And in the village of Rosemont, just outside of Chicago, the city has condemned a small metal-plating business so there will be more parking right across from the new casino. Due to a complicated federal regulatory regime, it will cost the metal-plating business twice the value of its land just to acquire permits at any new location. The government won't pay for those costs when it takes the business's property, and so this 24-year-old company is probably doomed.

Why do local governments repeatedly destroy existing homes and businesses? Because cities and developers think no one will stop them. Courts give condemnors free rein. Power without limits breeds just this type of abuse.

With the Vera Coking case, however, the courts have taken a first step in recognizing once again their vital role as a check on legislatures that overstep their authority at the behest of the politically powerful. Teeth must be restored to the original constitutional restraints on the use of eminent domain. Once that takes place, casinos may follow the lead of nearly every other industry in America by negotiating with private property owners, not the government, when they seek to secure property for private development.

Dana Berliner is an attorney at the Institute for Justice, a nonprofit law firm which represented Vera Coking in her successful fight against New Jersey's Casino Reinvestment Development Authority and Donald Trump.

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COMPASSION continued from page 35

the definition, development, practice, and expression of their religious beliefs." There are additional specific safeguards for participating groups. For example, they need not alter their organizational structure, which may be tied to particular churches.

Finally, Charitable Choice permits vouchers as one way of funding social services, and vouchers don't cause the same degree of government involvement as direct federal or state funding. For a long time religious colleges have taken federal and state funding under such programs as the G.I. Bill and Pell grants, and they have not been co-opted by the government.

MICHAEL HOROWITZ: Today's surprising consensus in favor of government funding of faith-based charities puts our nation at risk. We reached this consensus as a result of some seemingly logical steps. First, wide agreement exists that federal antipoverty programs have been counterproductive, in part because they are hollow at the core. Rather than fostering good values, they produce a mentality of entitlement in those who are "helped."

Most people also agree that the churches, in contrast to government programs, are doing extraordinary work with poor people. Take Catholic schools in the ghetto: For peanuts compared to public-school spending, the Catholic schools are educating and moving forward children who floundered in public schools.

One other thing inspires support for today's experiments: a conviction among the citizenry that much of our church/state jurisprudence is a product of bias against religion. Solemn Supreme Court decisions have insisted that a rabbi who mentions God at a high school graduation ceremony is somehow violating the First Amendment. Many Americans, believing faith is at the core of who we are at our best, have recoiled from the idea that our public squares must be devoid of religion.

These several factors end up producing the conclusion, "Let's end the discrimination against religious groups and give government money to faith-based groups." But this consensus ignores the dangers government dollars pose to religious institutions.

First, what will happen to the leadership of religious institutions seeking grant money? Do we really want presidents of religious organizations spending more time reading the *Federal Register* than the Bible? Do we want them to be retreads from the Department of Health and Human Services, instead of people rooted in community and church activities?

Next, think of the likely behavior of politicians trying to get credit for sending monies to churches back home.

Then there is the overlooked problem that the key to the success of religious institutions is precisely their voluntary, self-financing character. They have to hold bake sales; the money comes out of the pockets of members. That kind of money receives better stewardship than funding that comes in because you go to Washington and they give you a few million bucks, which nobody even notices in the budget. Suddenly, instead of friends and neighbors, the people you've got to please are faceless D.C. bureaucrats.

Then there's the issue of dependency on government. The word that matters here is *overhead*. "Overhead" has corrupted many grant recipients. What happens is they say, "Look, we're going to perform these social services you're paying us for in the grant, but gee, 20 percent of our president's time will have to be spent supervising that, so please also kick in 20 percent of his salary. And 40 percent of the people who come into our church building will be associated with this grant; so how about paying for 40 percent of the heating bill?" When I was in the government, there were instances where Harvard and Yeshiva University received overhead compensation in excess of 100 percent of their original grant.

So the grant-receiving organization spends the first couple of years feeling independent of the government, but then they wake up in year three and suddenly discover that there's less generosity on the part of their old local contributors, who now don't need to give as much. Suddenly, paying the president's salary, the minister's salary, the heating bill on the church, becomes dependent on having that federal grant renewed.

This is the sad story of the secular non-profit sector—volunteer groups, foundations, etc.—back in the 1960s under President Johnson's "Great Society." Before the federal government began funding them, those nonprofit groups raised shoestring money from their members and performed miracles almost on the order of what church groups are now achieving. But today these groups have lost their vitality.

I do think we can leverage the miracles wrought by church institutions, but not through government grants. We should use the tax code, not grants. Then government only has to make a one-shot certification of organizations as eligible to receive charity, increase the tax incentive to make donations, and let individuals judge which religious institutions to support.

ESBECK: That's a good deal of alarmism. Michael has brought out a series of one-sided horrors about what government has and has not done. What Michael says he wants is continued discrimination against religious organizations. Why not let them decide for themselves whether they want to participate?

HOROWITZ: It's hard to say no when money is offered, no matter who you are. It was one thing when America lost the independence of its nonprofit sector because of the Great Society. It would be much worse if we lost the independence of our religious communities.

MARSHALL BREGER: Mike, you need to have more faith in faith. I don't think you should assume every religious group will give up God for Mammon. Some will, but I think most will not. And you shouldn't assume that every addition of funds will immediately go to a large corner office rather than into work in the field—where the private money is just not enough to meet human needs today.

I applaud the increased interest in faith-based charities, because they work. But we've been afraid to use this effective tool for two reasons. First, statism. FDR's "New Deal" and LBJ's "Great Society" programs led many to believe social work is strictly a government function. Second, we've had the view that church/state separation requires social services only be provided in a secular mode.

I hope the inauguration of Charitable Choice is part of a larger shift back to a reasonable balance between secular and religious approaches toward social problems.

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Flashback

TO KNOW NOTHING OF WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE YOU WERE BORN IS TO REMAIN EVER A CHILD—*Cicero*

Mother Jones, Anti-Feminist

Today we know Mother Jones as the name of a magazine for yuppie consumerist liberals whose idea of a radical act is selling their R.J. Reynolds stock and buying Microsoft. The real Mother Jones—Irish-born Mary Harris Jones (1830-1930), the coal miners' angel and hell-raiser who said "I would fight God Almighty himself if he didn't play square with me"—was both far more radical *and* far more reactionary than her namesake.

Her nickname was not bestowed sarcastically. Mother Jones, whose husband and four young children had died of yellow fever, venerated the family along with strikes and socialism. She disdained the rich not least because they hired others to care for their children: "The rich woman who has a maid to raise her child can't expect to get the right viewpoint of life," she wrote in *Miners Magazine*. "If they would raise their own babies, their hearts would open and their feelings would become human. And the effect on the child is just as bad. A nurse can't give her mother's love to somebody else's child."

Mother Jones detested the middle-class reformers who sought to transfer household functions to the market or the state. She suspected that capitalists were scheming to force women into the paid labor force and children into daycare; the prospect did not please her: "The human being is the only animal which is neglected in its babyhood. The brute mother suckles and preserves her young at the cost of her own life, if need be. The human mother hires another, poorer woman for the job."

Mother Jones was not given to conciliatory speech. As a near-nonagenarian, she told striking steelworkers in Gary, Indiana, "I'll be 90 years old the first of

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May, but by God if I have to, I'll take 90 guns and shoot hell out of 'em.... We'll give Gary, Morgan, and the gang of bloodsuckers a free pass to heaven or hell."

The wives of these "bloodsuckers" were also the enemy: "The plutocrats have organized their women. They keep them busy with suffrage and prohibition and charity." As for Mother Jones, "I don't belong to the women's club," she snarled. "I belong to the fighting army of the working class."

Like "Red Emma" Goldman, Mother Jones opposed female suffrage. Goldman was an Anti out of what some call misogyny and others call realism. "Woman, essentially a purist, is naturally bigoted and relentless in her effort to make others as good as she thinks they ought to be," argued Goldman. "Woman's narrow and purist attitude toward life makes her a greater danger to liberty wherever she has political power."

Mother Jones, on the other hand, viewed suffrage as undermining the family. "Women are out of place in political work," she said in 1913. "There is already a great responsibility upon women's shoulders—that of rearing rising generations.... Home training of the child should be her task, and it is the most beautiful of tasks. Solve the industrial problem and the men will earn enough so that women can remain home and learn it."

A healthy family life was even essential to Jones' individualistic American socialism. "Let the women stay at home and we shall have, when strikes come, better strikers," she said.

"You don't need a vote to raise hell! You need convictions and a voice!" Mother Jones protested. "I have never had a vote and I have raised hell all over this country!"

The working-class reactionary radical Mother Jones would be a non-person to today's feminist establishment. Contrast her bluntness with the way contemporary feminists have stroked President Clinton in their coquettish pursuit of power.

Mother Jones once met with President William Howard Taft, whom she rather liked, to ask that labor radicals be pardoned. "Now, Mother," said Taft, "the trouble lies here: if I put the pardoning power in your hands there would be no one left in the jails."

To which she replied, "I'm not so sure of that, Mr. President. A lot of those who are in would be out, but a lot of those who are out would be in."

That is speaking truth to power.

—Bill Kauffman

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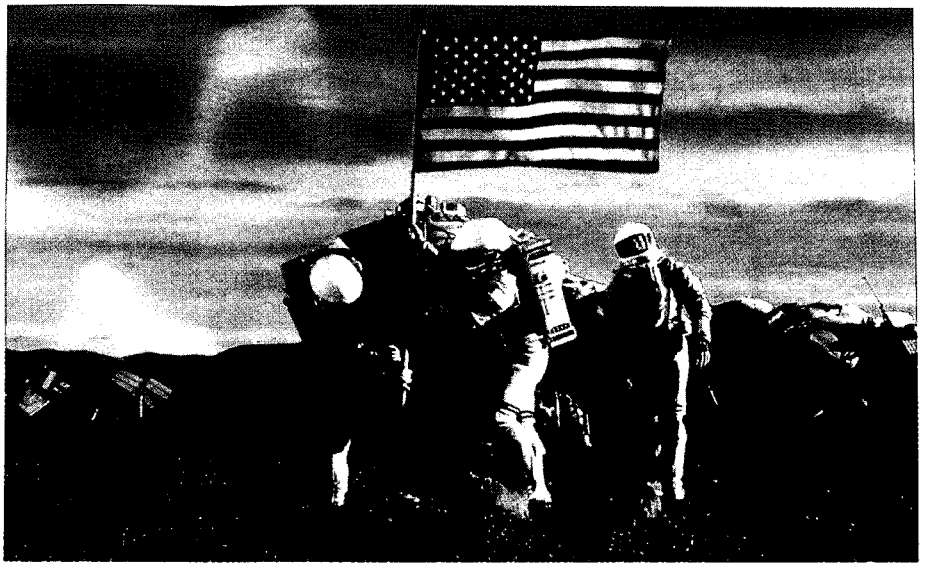
Because It Is There



A scene from *Mission to Mars*

AP Photo

Just when it seems we've given up on outer space, who would have expected Hollywood to get our rockets revving again? Movies often serve as propaganda (most often, at present, for things like casual sex and offhanded violence). But *Mission to Mars*—a recent hit and one of two major films on the subject this year, the other being next fall's *Red Planet*—delivers a more admirable message. It is a riveting space thriller that celebrates the American adventurer's spirit.

As the birthplace of flight and the first country to land a man on the moon, a desire to go to Mars might be expected to be wired into our national consciousness. In director Brian De Palma's film it's clearly seen as a uniquely American goal and privilege. The movie opens in the year 2020, on the eve of the first manned trip to the fourth planet from the sun. Having surrounded themselves at a backyard barbecue with family, friends, and fluttering American flags, the astronauts confidently refer to their mission in terms of ownership: "Mars is yours now," one of them says to Don Cheadle's Commander Luke Graham, leader of the first team scheduled to land on the planet. "Go get it."

This cockiness doesn't last long on Mars' surface, as Luke and company come under attack from a swirling, almost prescient sandstorm (in a touch that borders on xenophobia, the two Russian members of Luke's group are the first to get the axe). The rest of the movie follows the efforts of a rescue team—led by Gary Sinise and Tim Robbins—to uncover Mars' malevolent mystery, one which holds the key to the existence of mankind.

This adventure unfolds with such tense and gripping realism you'll likely be glued to the screen in the same way you were during the first shuttle launches. The filmmakers received unprecedented cooperation from NASA (largely due to the script's positive tone; there's no mention of the bureaucratic bungling that leads to missing Polar Landers), and the agency's input can be felt in each technically precise scene. De Palma, the suspense specialist behind such films as *Body Double* and *Dressed to Kill*, manipulates the film's cramped, zero-gravity settings to maximum effect. During a scene in which the astronauts have only a few minutes to repair a shuttle leak, the molasses-like environment makes the challenge even more excruciating; our heroes' movements may be slower than usual but the clock watching over them proceeds at regular speed, so that each second ticking away counts for more than it would on Earth.

Mission to Mars pays tribute to the kind of courage that made Alan Shepard and John Glenn national heroes, the same sort of bravery that will be necessary if we're to make it to our neighbor planet. Robbins' Commander Woody Blake is modeled on these men, exhibiting the seemingly paradoxical spirit of wild abandon and cautious intelligence that every astronaut must have. Blasting off to the stars without hesitation, always confident in the face of adversity, Woody is the quintessential American cowboy; his space suit might as well come with spurs.

Yet for all its rah-rah enthusiasm, *Mission to Mars* ultimately is a humbling experience. Unlike the old manifest destiny—in which explorers nearly wiped native civilizations off the map by virtue of their technological superiority—this futuristic manifest destiny imagines travelers who encounter a superior intelligence that makes even their greatest feats of science and derring-do seem quaint. Whether this is a guilty response to past history or simply an expression of wonder at a galaxy that seems so vast, it provides a reassuring counterpoint to the initial conquering attitude of the astronauts.

An idealized pioneer spirit courses through the film. "That's what we're born for isn't it?" asks one of the astronauts. "To stand on a new world and look beyond to the next one? That's who we are." There are, of course, more practical reasons for supporting interplanetary exploration: to foster technological innovation, to secure American oversight of a strategic resource of the future, etc. But *Mission to Mars*, as befits a movie, taps into more emotional, immediate reasons, ones tied to the enduring curiosity of the human spirit. Why should we go to Mars? Because, as Earth's greatest spacefaring nation, we can.

—Josh Larsen

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Beat the Press

THE HAND THAT RULES THE PRESS...RULES THE COUNTRY—*Judge Learned Hand*

She can't do that, betrayal is *our* job!

When *A Vast Conspiracy*, the Clinton apologia by Jeffrey Toobin, appeared in bookstores last winter, my phone almost exploded. A few reporters and about a dozen TV and radio producers called out of the blue: "Jonah, why haven't we talked more?" "We should really have a drink...." "Hey, I was just saying the other day, 'How's my buddy Jonah doing?'"

All of a sudden, these long lost friends wanted me to come on TV—or better yet convince my mother to appear. What really put the chum in the water was the way Toobin, of the *New Yorker* and ABC News, had offhandedly suggested without evidence that my mother, Lucianne Goldberg (the friend/agent of Linda Tripp who suggested she record her conversations with Monica Lewinsky), had had an affair with LBJ.

I refused to dignify Toobin's lies (Mom's taking legal action and Random House is scared). But now that his book is holding space on the remainder tables between the Ricky Martin calendars and the how-to-prepare-for-Y2K survival guides, there is a larger point worth making about journalists as a breed.

Toobin, echoing many of his peers, calls Linda Tripp an "odious" person who did the worst thing imaginable: betray a friend. Yet Toobin did far worse. He offered false friendship to my mother and me (and other people as well) for the sole purpose of making money on a book. Tripp, on the other hand, acted out of desperate fear of what the law and the lawless Clintonistas would do to her unless she was armed with hard evidence.

Toobin's hypocrisy, however, is standard press procedure. Like the reporters who called me "out of friendship," Toobin was using the everyday tools of the media trade: duplicity, fraud, and lies.

Recall how, a few years ago in the famous Food Lion case, ABC producers built up fake relationships and then secretly filmed fellow employees—sometimes in acts suggested by the filmers themselves. In subsequent interviews many of these employees said they felt betrayed: The producers had befriended them only to expose them unfairly on national TV.

During the momentary spate of hand-wringing over such tactics, the media big feet circled the wagons. Don Hewitt, executive producer of "60 Minutes," explained, "It's the small crime versus the greater good.... If you can catch someone violating 'Thou shalt not steal' by your violating 'Thou shalt not lie,' that's a pretty good trade-off." Mike Wallace, also of "60 Minutes," told the *Washington Post* that when it comes to conning people, "It really depends on your motive. Are you doing it for drama, or are you doing it for illumination?" Regardless, "You don't like to baldly lie, but I have."

Rick Kaplan was the executive producer for ABC's "Prime Time Live" at the time of the Food Lion case (he now runs CNN, whose impeachment coverage led detractors to call it the Clinton News Network). He insisted that secret taping is O.K. in a just cause: "The basic lie is one of omission."

So journalists have made careers, and networks have made millions, by deceiving unsuspecting people. Until Tripp, the only time journalists were ever upset about such deceptions was when it happened to them. In 1995, Mike Wallace, who has taped hundreds of secret or ambush interviews, used a hidden camera on a fellow journalist. He interviewed magazine writer Karon Haller without her permission. Unlike the hundreds of similar interviews with executives and government officials conducted on "60 Minutes," this was declared a betrayal and a breach of ethics. Wallace was reprimanded by the news division and forced to apologize.

Then there was the incredible firestorm over Joe Klein's anonymous authorship of the Clinton exposé *Primary Colors*. Klein denied to fellow journalists—his friends!—that he had written the book. For this relatively minor lapse in group loyalty, the national press quite literally went into a national panic. "Much of the staff felt betrayed by Joe's action," explained a *Newsweek* editor. PBS's Ken Bode sniffed, "Joe Klein has an apology to offer to his fellow journalists." The *New York Times* wrote a pouty editorial, "The Color of Mendacity," saying "it is shameless of Mr. Klein to excuse his falsehoods."

Until Linda Tripp came around, one could argue that the press held a double standard just like other professions known to circle the wagons, such as police or university professors. So why such hatred toward Tripp? How can *Time's* Margaret Carlson—by all accounts a decent person—say that Tripp "lost membership in the family of man" when "she hit the On button" on her recorder, when so many journalists make a living and win prestigious awards by hitting the same button? How can Toobin call Linda Tripp "odious" without facing lightning bolts for his own behavior?

The only answer I can conceive is that they resent being reminded how vile their own profession often is.

—Jonah Goldberg

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EDITED BY MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER

the Digest

SUMMARIES OF IMPORTANT NEW RESEARCH FROM THE NATION'S UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, AND INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS

POLITICS

Divided Over Clinton

Seymour Lipset and Karlyn Bowman, *Public Opinion and the Clinton Legacy*. American Enterprise Institute, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Political scientist Lipset and Bowman of the American Enterprise Institute observe that Americans have a high regard for Clinton's policies but little respect for his character. In a January 1999 Pew Research Center poll, 44 percent of those surveyed called Bill Clinton a successful President, a sharp rise from the October '94 figure of 14 percent. A June 1999 Gallup poll reports that 74 percent of Americans approve of his handling of the economy, up from 45 percent in February 1993.

But Americans give low marks to the President's character. A January 1999 Gallup survey showed 69 percent thought President Clinton was doing a good job, yet only 24 percent thought him "honest and trustworthy." By contrast, in December 1988, 63 percent of Americans approved of the way President Reagan did his job, and 79 percent approved of his character.

Support for the achievements of the Clinton administration doesn't necessarily mean an increase in support for the Democratic Party. Between 1993-99, Democrats gained some ground in New England and lost some in the Southwest. There hasn't been much change in the total percentages of voters belonging to the two parties. Today, about 34-36 percent of voters are Democrats, 28-30 percent are Republicans, the rest independents.

Washington Gives and Takes

Herman Leonard, Jay Welder, and Jose Acevedo. *The Federal Budget and the States, Fiscal Year 1998*. John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University/Office of Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510.

There are frequent struggles between the states and Washington about how taxes should be collected and distributed. Herman Leonard and his associates at Harvard examined Census data on federal spending and Tax Foundation research on federal taxes and found some states benefit from federal taxing and spending, while others don't.

In general, the federal government collects money from relatively prosperous northeastern and midwestern states and redistributes it to lower-income southern and western states. Connecticut loses the most revenue, paying over $2,400 per capita in taxes more than it gets back in federal subsidies. New Mexico receives the most from Washington: over $3,700 per person.

Several factors explain the disparity:

Increasing tax rates. States with many high-income earners send far more taxes to Washington than states with large numbers of poor people. Connecticut has the nation's highest per capita income ($33,447); so its residents have federal income tax bills 45 percent above the national average. But it receives only an average amount of federal funds in return.

Defense spending. Although subsidies for individuals, like Social Security and Medicare, amount to over twice what Washington spends on the military, these payments are fairly evenly distributed, with mild concentrations in retirement havens like Florida. Defense Department spending is more uneven. New Mexico gets more federal subsidies than any other state because it's a low-income state with many military bases.

Other federal spending. Many federal grants aren't evenly distributed to the states. When the interstate highway system was constructed, federal transportation grants flowed to states with low populations and lots of land. With the interstates completed, many northeastern and midwestern states want the funds to be spent on mass transit. But western Senators have managed to ensure that a disproportionate amount of transportation funds stays in the West.

Can Democracy Prevail?

James Q. Wilson, "Democracy for All?" in *Commentary* (March 2000), 165 East 56th Street, New York, New York 10022.

With communism's collapse, nations around the world want to become democracies. But Wilson, a Pepperdine University public policy professor, is skeptical about how long many newly democratic nations will choose freedom.

Stable and long-lasting democracies, Wilson writes, have four things in common. They are isolated, separated from other nations by oceans or mountains. Second, private property is common not only among the rich but the middle classes as well. Democracies also tend to be ethnically homogeneous and to have deeply rooted traditions of human rights.

None of these four conditions, Wilson contends, "can be found in China or Russia or much of Africa or the Middle East." Latin American nations may have one or two but not all four.

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Wilson suggests that free trade and globalization are the best ways to strengthen nascent democracies. "Not every nation with free markets is democratic, but every democratic nation has something akin to a free market." Markets allow entrepreneurs to innovate and allow new ideas to prosper, "qualities hard to come by in undemocratic regimes."

"In the long run, democracy and human freedom are good for everyone though they may create some mischief in the near term. But the good they bring can only be appreciated when people are calm and tolerance is accepted."

ECONOMICS

Free Traders Fight Back

Bruce Stokes, "The Protectionist Myth," in *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1999/2000), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

After the anti-World Trade Organization (WTO) riots in Seattle, some observers contend that protectionists are gaining ground. But Council on Foreign Relations fellow Stokes says free traders shouldn't panic. "Free trade is not in retreat. On the contrary, tariffs are declining and trade is advancing almost everywhere."

• Trade now accounts for 37 percent of the global gross domestic product, up from 27 percent in 1980. "Any future interruption of that commerce," he argues, "would have a greater effect on economic growth than ever before."

• The Uruguay Round of trade talks imposed limits on 87 percent of all merchandise tariffs, up from 73 percent a decade ago. While some countries have raised tariffs, overall tariffs have been steadily falling. Latin American tariffs, for example, have fallen by half in the past decade.

• Voluntary export restraints (VERs), such as the limits Japan placed on car exports to the U.S. in the 1980s, have nearly been eliminated. In 1992, Europe had 33 VERs in place and the U.S. had 17. Today, the U.S. restrictions have been eliminated, and only one European restriction, scheduled to be removed this year, remains.

• Antidumping duty orders, where one nation imposes tariffs on another because of alleged "dumping" of goods below cost, are declining. Between 1991-94, the U.S. initiated 226 antidumping orders; between 1995-98, only 94 orders were initiated. Most of the major U.S. antidumping restrictions imposed in the 1980s against foreign automakers and machine tool manufacturers have been eliminated, and threatened new restrictions against semiconductor producers and tool makers haven't materialized.

• Free trade agreements between countries are steadily increasing. After signing the NAFTA agreement in 1994, Mexico signed additional trade pacts with Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Once these pacts have been signed and countries benefit from increased trade, they're unlikely to be rescinded.

Protectionists shouldn't be discounted entirely, says Stokes. New forms of protectionism, couched as support for Third World labor or for the environment, are fully capable of emerging. But he advises free traders not to panic over dangers that don't currently exist. "Raising such a false alarm only inhibits trade negotiators and elected leaders from risking further trade liberalizations."

SOCIETY

Keep Bureaucrats Out of the Medicine Cabinet

John E. Calfee, *Prices, Markets, and the Pharmaceutical Revolution.* AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Congress is debating whether to extend to prescription drugs used at home the price restrictions that Medicare currently imposes on drugs used in hospitals. AEI scholar Calfee believes Congress should block this proposal: "Adding a drug benefit to the current Medicare system would be extremely dangerous," because it would hinder pharmaceutical firms' ability to create new, life-enhancing medicines.

Drug companies appear to be highly profitable, but that's misleading. Much press has been lavished on successful "blockbuster" drugs, but far less space is given to experimental drugs that failed. New drugs seem to be inordinately expensive, yet the high prices are largely the result of pharmaceutical firms' trying to recoup research expenses during the relatively short time new drugs receive patent protection. Were the prices of these new drugs artificially lowered, pharmaceutical companies would have to cut their research budgets substantially. "There is no substitute for the profit motive for inducing and guiding research," Calfee writes.

Some evidence of price controls' affect on the drug market is provided by India, which for generations has generally ignored international drug patents. The result: Indian consumers can purchase new drugs for a fraction of the price elsewhere, but are less likely to be able to buy drugs that can treat problems that are specifically Indian, such as malaria, since drug companies won't spend the time doing risky research if they can't receive a reasonable return on their investment. According to *The Economist*, of 1,223 new drugs developed between 1975-97, only 11 were for tropical diseases, largely because the countries that would benefit from these drugs have "a poor record for respecting property rights to pharmaceuticals."

Price controls also have another unintended effect: They tend to last a long time and create unnecessary layers of bureaucracy. The history of Medicare's effort to restrict costs provides an example. When Medicare tried to slow price increases by lumping different treatments into "diagnostic-related groups" (DRGs) and limiting the amount it would pay for procedures in each group, the result was the creation of scores of "DRG consultants" who taught physicians how to change procedures slightly so that they'd be included in a DRG that provided doctors with higher fees.

Calfee suggests Congress adopt a Medicare reform proposed by Senator John Breaux (D-La.) which would provide vouchers to seniors who could then buy needed drugs without bureaucratic

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meddling. Left relatively unhindered, drug companies would be able to continue their innovative research.

For God, Country, and Boys

Heather Mac Donald, "Why the Boy Scouts Work," in *City Journal* (Winter 2000), Manhattan Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

Many groups try to steer troubled boys towards a path of virtue, but these groups, writes Manhattan Institute fellow Mac Donald, are struggling to do what the Boy Scouts have done for most of the twentieth century. "To boys desperate for authority and discipline," the Scouts offer "self-control and a clear path towards achievement."

The Boy Scouts were founded a century ago when concerned citizens worried that young men, lacking clear standards of right and wrong, would be inclined to choose vice over virtue. Canadian naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton warned that instead of the "robust, manly, self-reliant boyhood" of earlier generations, the young men of 1900 were "a lot of flat-chested cigarette smokers, with shaky nerves and a doubtful vitality." Seton, along with Lord Baden-Powell in Britain, founded groups that became today's Scouting movement.

For decades, the Boy Scouts thrived on a combination of woodcraft and traditional morality as exemplified by the Scout's code of duty to God and country. But "the 1960s counterculture and the Boy Scouts of America were a train wreck waiting to happen." The Boy Scouts tried to be "relevant" in ways that weakened the organization dramatically. The 1972 edition of the *Boy Scout Handbook* dropped sections on canoeing and knots and substituted material on treating rat bites and drug abuse. Scoutmasters were encouraged to become "personal growth counselors." For much of the '70s, the Boy Scouts changed their name to Scouting/USA.

As membership plummeted, the Boy Scouts made a return to tradition in 1978, restoring camping material and their traditional name. The Scouts retained their commitment to the inner city, but encouraged urban chapters to hike and camp rather than stay in the ghetto. The result, Mac Donald observes, is that inner-city Scout chapters provide troubled young men with valuable moral lessons they are unable to get elsewhere. "The little details that fill each meeting constantly reinforce a code of conduct based on self-restraint, neatness, and courtesy—the essentials of civilized life." In addition, citizenship merit badges encourage urban Boy Scouts to learn basic civics lessons—such as the contents of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—that have long been abandoned by the public schools.

Today, Mac Donald warns, the Boy Scouts are under siege by "the American litigation machine," which is eager to require the Scouts to accept atheists and homosexuals. For years, the Scouts have won these cases because they are a private organization. But the recent New Jersey Supreme Court decision forcing the Boy Scouts to accept homosexual scoutmasters could cripple or destroy the organization. How many parents, Mac Donald wonders, want to have a homosexual scoutmaster spend a weekend in the woods with their sons? And "if private groups have no freedom to choose their own leaders, private groups will wither away."

Who does more to help troubled urban teens, MacDonald asks, scoutmasters—or trial lawyers and judges? "Scouting has done more good in a year than an army of ACLU leaders has ever done."

Failed Aid to Education

Lisa Snell with Lindsay Anderson, *Remedial Education Reform: Private Alternatives to Traditional Title I.* Reason Public Policy Institute, 3415 South Sepulveda Boulevard #400, Los Angeles, California 90034.

The Title I program of remedial education for poor elementary school children is the Department of Education's biggest program. Started in 1965, Title I currently spends $8.2 billion annually on indirect aid to 11 million children. But Snell, of the Reason Public Policy Institute, finds no evidence the money spent on Title I has had any effect on student achievement.

The Department of Education has conducted two major evaluations of Title I. A 1984 study found nearly all of the Title I-funded elementary school students required extra help in middle school. The poorest achievers benefited the least from the program. A 1997 study found that, after $118 billion had been spent, participants in Title I programs "score lower than nonparticipants and that this gap in achievement is not closed over time."

One reason Title I is so ineffective is its structure. Until 1994, most Title I money went to supplemental "pull-out" programs designed to provide two-and-a-half hours of additional education each week to poor learners. But two Department of Education reports in 1997 found Title I students have, at most, 10 minutes of additional instruction each day. Seventy percent of the students skipped class. Most of the time, Title I teachers didn't coordinate lessons with a student's regular teachers, ensuring a great deal of repetition.

In 1994, Congress reformed Title I by partially replacing the "pull-out" programs with "whole school" programs which give money to a school for computers or textbooks in hopes struggling children will indirectly benefit. But a 1999 American Institutes for Research report found that only three out of 24 popular whole school programs surveyed "have strong evidence that they improve student achievement."

Snell offers several Title I reforms: Schools could contract out with private instructional firms like Sylvan Learning Center or Kaplan Educational Centers. Congress could alter Title I to give aid to students rather than schools, and allow the grant to follow a student from school to school. The amount of forms federal Title I evaluators require could be trimmed. (An Arizona school superintendent reports she "has 165 employees—45 percent of her staff—to manage federal programs that make up 6 percent of her budget.")

"Until Title I becomes a program focused on student outcomes with a funding system that allows public and private programs to compete for Title I students, disadvantaged students will continue to lag."

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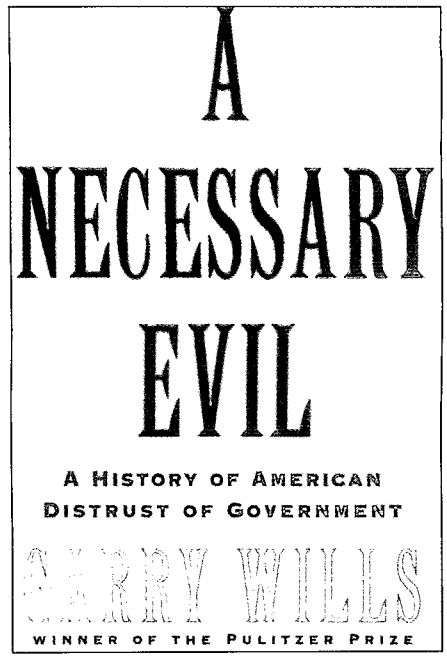
BookTalk



OUR FRIEND, THE STATE

By David Boaz

A Necessary Evil
By Garry Wills
Simon & Schuster, 352 pages, $26

What a remarkable book this is. Garry Wills has managed to categorize and rebut more "anti-government myths" than most of us could identify. By the time he's finished, everyone from Thomas Jefferson, Thoreau, Brook Farm, and H.L. Mencken to Martin Luther King Jr., the NRA, and Timothy McVeigh has been assigned a place in his classification system.

Wills gives us two "revolutionary" myths, six "constitutional" myths, and then six kinds of people who challenge or resist the authority of the national state: nullifiers, seceders, insurrectionists, vigilantes, withdrawers, and disobeyers. Most of these categories are a bit arcane and moss-covered in the twenty-first century, but occasionally they fit contemporary politics. He counts as "insurrectionists," for instance, academics who find an individual right to keep and bear arms in the Second Amendment.

Oddly, although the book purports to be a defense of government against Americans who prefer liberty to government power, Wills hardly ever cites a modern libertarian or conservative. Criticisms of Daniel Shays, John Taylor of Caroline, John C. Calhoun, John Brown, clinic bombers, and McVeigh are all well and good, but where is any serious engagement with F.A. Hayek, Milton Friedman, Harvey Mansfield, Robert Nozick, Randy Barnett, or Richard Epstein—people who in different ways have defended the wisdom of limited government and the Founders' vision? Where even is a consideration of the arguments of Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, or Rush Limbaugh?

Because Wills doesn't consider the arguments of any actual advocates of limited government, he spends a surprising amount of time rebutting claims that don't seem very important. Other times his rebuttals just seem odd. He declares, for instance, that "Nowhere…does the Constitution mention checks, or balances, or separation of powers." Well, no. It just checks, balances, and separates the powers.

A major theme of the book is that throughout American history we find contrasting sets of principles held by advocates and critics of central government. Those opposed to government power believe government should be "provincial, amateur, authentic, spontaneous, candid, homogeneous, traditional, populist, organic, rights-oriented, religious, voluntary, participatory, and rotational." Government's advocates think it should be "cosmopolitan, expert, authoritative, efficient, confidential, articulated in its parts, progressive, elite, mechanical, duties-oriented, secular, regulatory, and delegative, with a division of labor." I hardly know what to make of this alleged dichotomy. I disagree with the author's argument that we find these various priorities opposing each other in all the central conflicts of our history, from the Revolution to the 1960s.

As an advocate of limited government, I would not want to be forced to pick one group or the other. Part of the problem, of course, is that Wills has chosen words that tilt the debate. Government close to the people, rather than in distant capitals, is called "provincial." Citizen control of government is called "amateur."

In his final section, "A Necessary Good," Wills briefly lays out a positive case for government. But who in modern America is opposed to government per se? Wills is trying to smuggle in an expansive central government, virtually unconstrained by the Constitution, in a plain brown wrapper marked merely "Government."

Like so many opponents of liberty, he triumphantly uses traffic laws to prove the necessity of government. He begins by writing, "I know men who feel they have lost their liberty if they are obliged to wear a seat belt or a motorcycle helmet. It is odd that they cavil at this while they submit to far more stringent restrictions." What sort of restrictions? "What could be more arbitrary…than the order to drive only on the right side of the road?" After further philosophical reflection on the rules of the road, Wills writes, "I have deliberately taken something rather trivial to illustrate the blessings of government."

Actually, his example proves a great deal. Of course we need rules to be able to use the roads with other drivers, and of course we want roads to give us mobility and prosperity. To oppose stop signs and assigned lanes is not to be a libertarian, or even an anarchist. It is to be a nihilist, or a child, or a Unabomber. The purest libertarian understands that humans need to cooperate in order to achieve their goals, and that cooperation requires some agreed-upon rules. The key distinction is between rules that prevent harm to others and enable cooperation, and rules that are designed to prevent harm to *ourselves*. The

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reason people "feel they have lost their liberty if they are obliged to wear a seat belt" is that that rule is designed not to make social activity possible but to tell us how to run our lives. And anyone who cannot understand that distinction cannot understand the American heritage of freedom and the American distrust of government.

After all of Wills' efforts to prove that the Founders did not really distrust government—they set one up, after all—and that all the Americans who have challenged the national state are somehow unfaithful to the system, we are left with the reality that the United States was created by people who loved liberty, feared power, and set up a government of delegated, enumerated, and thus limited, powers.

Wills makes his own, quite different goals clear when he writes, "The real victims [of our ingrained fear of government] are the millions of poor or shelterless or medically indigent who have been told, over the years, that they must lack care or life support in the name of their very own freedom. Better for them to starve than to be enslaved by 'big government.'" This is not the place for a discussion of whether limited or unlimited government creates more wealth, shelter, and medical care. Suffice it to say that the countries with the biggest governments do not have very good records in that regard.

I'll stick with Thomas Paine, who bequeathed to America the notion that "society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil."

David Boaz is executive vice president of the Cato Institute and the author of Libertarianism: A Primer.

PORTRAIT OF A GRAY LADY

By Richard Miniter

The Trust
By Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones
Little Brown, 896 pages, $29.95

As incredible as it may seem, the *New York Times* began its life as a Republican Party propaganda organ. It was founded by Henry J. Raymond, a staunch Republican and Speaker of the New York State Assembly, and George Jones, a banker, as a "conservative counterpoint to Horace Greeley's *Tribune*," note authors Tifft and Jones. Under conservative control, the paper exposed Boss Tweed and refused to endorse the corrupt GOP presidential nominee James G. Blaine in 1884—a move which drove away advertisers and ultimately put the paper on a path to bankruptcy and liberalism. In 1893, the founders' heirs sold the paper to its editor, Charles R. Miller, a devoted Democrat. By 1896, it was losing $1,000 a day—roughly the price of a Manhattan brownstone.

Though the paper was considered "the most picturesque old ruin among newspapers in America," no one in New York was foolish or romantic enough to buy it. That's when Harry Alloway, a *New York Times* financial reporter, sent a telegram that would eventually save the newspaper and change the news business forever. It read: "Would *New York Times* proposition be attractive now? Answer confidential. H. Alloway." The recipient was Adolph S. Ochs, the sort of incredibly variegated man America seemed to be crowded with in the last century. The son of a German Jewish immigrant father who never amounted to much, Adolph had little schooling. He opposed female suffrage, championed the gold standard, was a hometown booster, and a southerner who was afraid of seeming "too Jewish."

After several devastating failures, young Adolph had made the *Chattanooga Times* a success by sheer force of will. Always one step from bankruptcy, Ochs was careful to present an image of success. His misleadingly prosperous appearance ensured a steady supply of loans from local and New York banks. Now he was being offered the *New York Times*.

How Ochs skillfully manipulated the wealthy New Yorkers who owned the paper into selling it to him, on favorable terms, is the best part of this book. How he eventually gained total control of the *Times* is another story of perseverance and guile that is a pleasure to read.

For the next 40 years of its life, the *New York Times* wandered through a series of near-death experiences—most of which the insuperable Ochs succeeded in keeping from public view. Even the triumphant completion of the *New York Times*' massive

headquarters at Times Square was a near disaster. His creditors were calling, and his investors threatened to pull out if he built an extra six-story tower. Ochs built it anyway, making it the tallest building in New York in 1921, and dared his partners to bolt. Ochs was a gambler without a gambler's nerves; so he bit his nails and hoped his bravado would succeed. It did. This financial and emotional high-wire act is the untold story of most entrepreneurs; we are lucky the authors chronicle it.

Ochs wasn't willing to support ideas he thought woolly-headed or avant-garde, even if it would win him plaudits. Some residue of his conservative southern upbringing remained. Under Ochs, the *New York Times* endorsed a never-enacted government scheme for jailing "Reds," and editorialized in favor of arresting "conspirators against our government," including anarchists, pacifists, and Bolsheviks. The paper had little sympathy for Sacco and Vanzetti or what it called "trade unionists." (The authors record these facts with a tongue-clucking, embarrassed tone.) Ochs' son-in-law, Arthur Hays Sulzberger, once asked him if the paper could run a review of the highly acclaimed book, *The Well of Loneliness*. It has a lesbian theme, Sulzberger admitted. Ochs emphatically refused. Later, Ochs asked, "Just what the hell is a lesbian?"

Ochs was a true newspaperman. He refused to pull stories that offended advertisers. He was the first publisher to run an entire government report so the reader could reach his own conclusions about the

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most important stories of the day. In his early days, when the paper was weighed down with debt, Ochs wrestled with endorsing the "free silver" views of William Jennings Bryan. If he gave up his support of sound money, he might have put Bryan over the top and made the paper's debts worthless, yet Ochs ultimately refused to trade his principles for his self-interest.

After Adolph Ochs passes from the scene, this book slows down. We learn a lot about what people are wearing and eating, but less and less about what they're thinking and doing. It seems the more access the authors have to living witnesses, the more cluttered the narrative becomes. *The Trust* was written with the full cooperation of the Ochs-Sulzberger clan, and the authors interviewed some 550 people connected to the *Times*, many more than once. It shows. Unless you are trapped on a long airplane flight or hired to review this 896-page tome, stop reading on page 162.

Richard Miniter writes for the Wall Street Journal Europe.

WE ARE ALL VICTIMS NOW

By Evan Gahr

Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man
By Susan Faludi
William Morrow, 662 pages, $27.50

In 1991, journalist Susan Faludi made her name with *Backlash*, a classic feminist tome arguing that men—in journalism, business, the fashion industry, etc.—had conspired to squash the feminist movement. Now Faludi has discovered men aren't so bad after all. Far from the oppressors depicted in *Backlash*, they are actually victims, themselves "stiffed" by society.

For her new book, Faludi claims she's "put aside for a time the assumption of male dominance, put away our feminist rap sheet of men's crimes and misdemeanors in order to [discover] that even the most powerful man had at least as much happen to him as he has made happen."

This book—published at a time of unprecedented opportunity and wealth—is filled with tales of woe and hardship. Many of its stories are compelling, and many of the men are presented with nuance and humanity. But many of the life histories don't fit Faludi's little pigeonhole. More importantly, the author's "empathy" simply emasculates the men. She ultimately portrays them as hapless creatures utterly at the mercy of social forces.

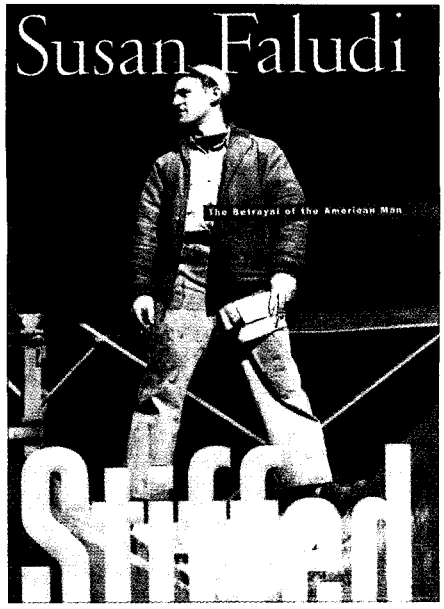
Listen up, guys, Faludi pleads: It's time to stop casting "feminism as the villain that must be defeated." The real problem is that the post-World War II generation was hoodwinked. "The fix was in from the start: corporate and cold-war America's promise to continue the World War II G.I.'s wartime experience of belonging, of meaningful engagement in a mission, was never authentic." Instead of the lifetime employment they were supposedly promised by government and corporations, men got "pink slips, union breaking, and downsizing." What Faludi calls the "ornamental culture" swept away institutions, such as unions, in which men felt some sense of belonging and replaced them with "visual spectacles of masculinity." Men became—to borrow a term from the feminist lexicon—sex objects.

"The ordinary man is no fool, he knows he cannot be Arnold Schwarzenegger. Nevertheless, the culture re-shapes his most basic sense of manhood by telling him that masculinity is something to drape over the body, not draw from inner resources…that manhood is displayed not demonstrated." Caught between this decorative masculinity and betrayed promises, contemporary men are in a bind.

Certainly the men Faludi trots out are a rather sorry lot. They include a male porn star who commits suicide because he can't "perform" properly, laid-off shipyard workers, rabid Cleveland Browns fans who cheer on their team in dog accoutrements only to see the team moved, an infamous Los Angeles gangster, and wife-beaters.

Not surprisingly, devoted husbands or fathers are largely absent. Men participating in the "Promise Keepers" movement are explained in pseudo-Freudian terms, as if it's unbelievable they could be trying to use religion to become better fathers and husbands.

Faludi's Oprah-esque "understanding" of her subjects is often an excuse to put her leftist spin on their lives—even when they express opinions incongruous with her analysis. To borrow a charge women often make of men: She "doesn't listen."



For example, when the Citadel was forced to admit Shannon Faulkner, cadets complained she was "ruining a 150-year-old tradition." Sounds logical. But Faludi sees the *real* problem: "Faulkner was thriving in and being rewarded as an 'individualist' by the celebrity culture in which the mass of cadets were drowning."

The cadets were drowning? Seems they had managed to keep their heads above water just fine before Shannon Faulkner appeared. Long before the arrival of the "ornamental culture" that supposedly oppresses men, women would have been as unwelcome at the Citadel as make-up at a *Ms.* magazine board meeting.

Faludi gives similar treatment to the "Spur Posse," a group of high school boys who racked up points for each girl they had sex with. According to Faludi, "The Spurs were trying desperately to avoid an anachronistic anonymity." Were they? Or were they simply the embodiment of the unrestricted sexuality—do whatever feels good—that feminism celebrates?

In any event, what is the solution for men shackled by the ornamental culture? We "need to create a new paradigm for human progress that will open doors for both sexes and act in a service of brotherhood that includes us all."

Oy vey. With friends like Faludi, do men really need enemies? I say bring back the man-hating feminists.

Evan Gahr is an online columnist for TAE.

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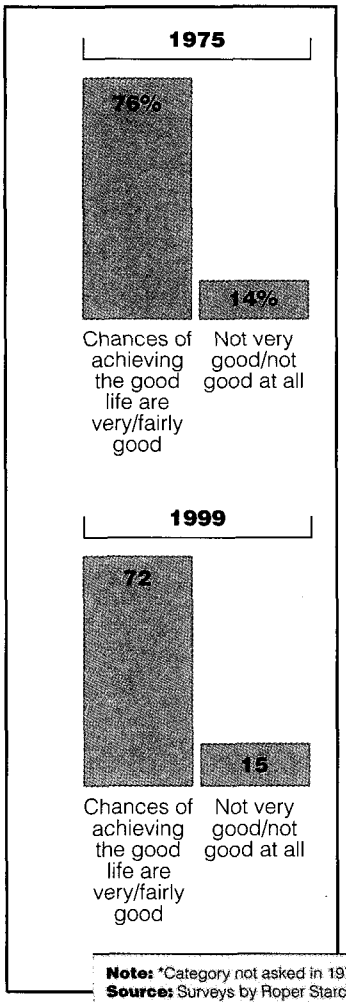
Opinion Pulse

EDITED BY KARLYN BOWMAN

THE GOOD LIFE

Over the past 25 years, there has been little change in Americans' belief that they will be able to achieve the good life. Around three-quarters say the chances are good, and only around 15 percent think their chances are not very good or not good at all. When asked what a "good life" means, a home, a happy marriage, children, a car, and a lawn rank at or near the top of the list. Substantial numbers of Americans say these are things they already have.

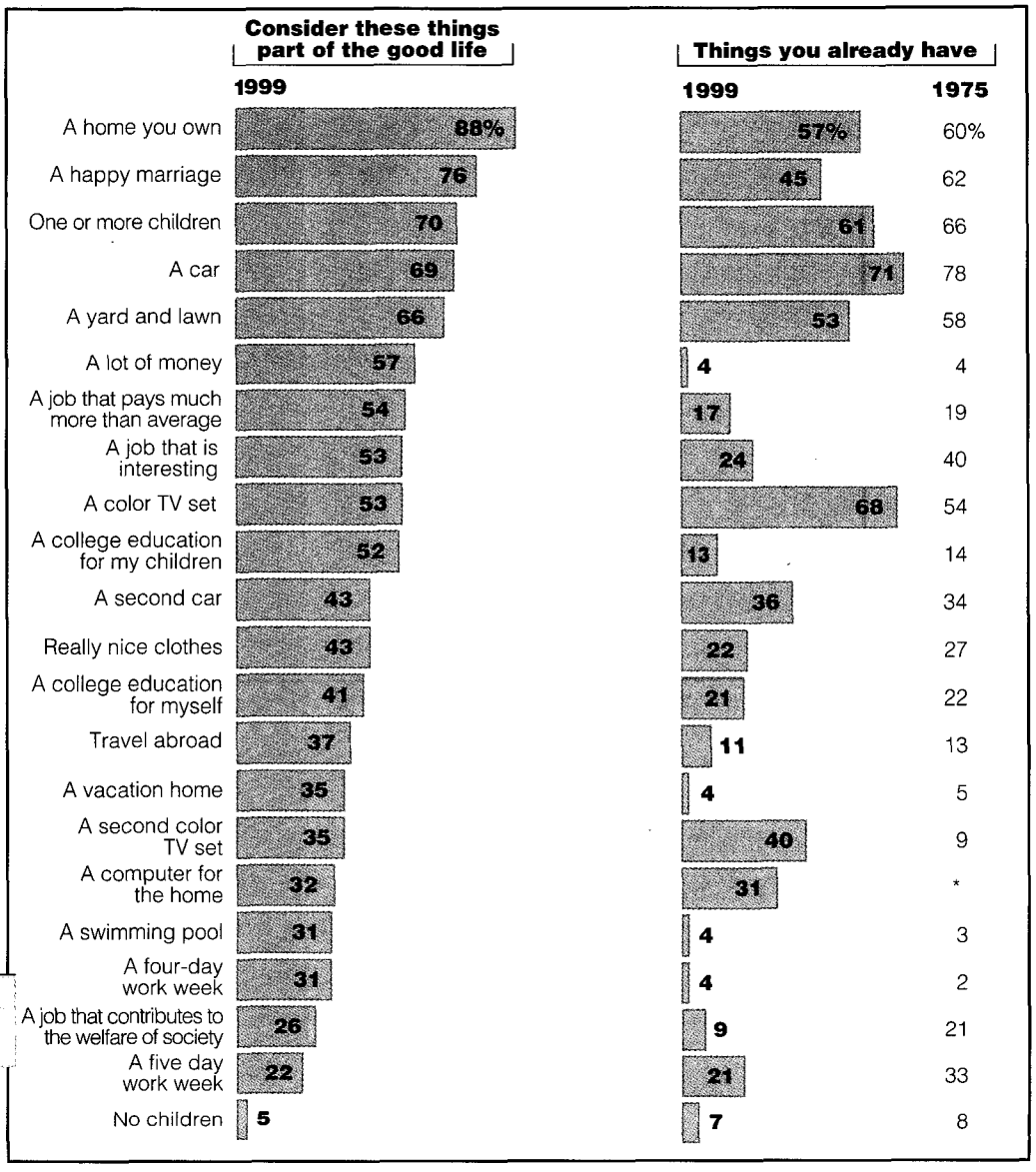
Question: Thinking about your concept of the good life, how good do you think...?



Note: *Category not asked in 1975.
Source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide, latest that of December 1999.

Question: We often hear people talk about what they want out of life...When you think of the good life—the life you'd like to have—which are...?

Question: Now do you...?



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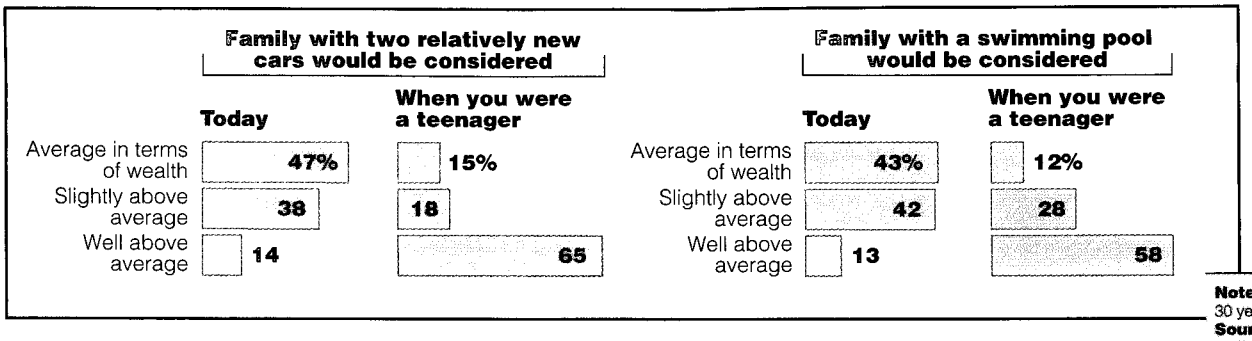
Measuring Prosperity

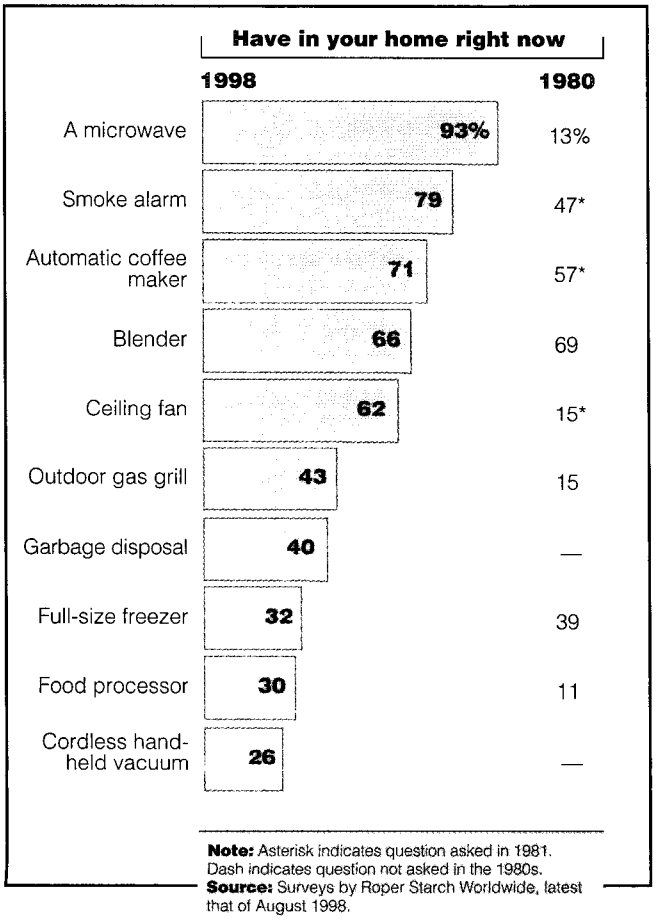
There are many ways to chart America's increasingly prosperous condition. One interesting approach asks people to compare ideas about status today and when they were growing up. Nearly half of adults 30 years of age or older say that a family with two relatively new cars would be considered "average" these days. Only 15 percent say that would have been the case when they were young. Though we have more "stuff" than in the past, we define personal success primarily in nonmaterial ways. Being a good parent or spouse ranks at the top.

Question: In terms of wealth, would a family today be considered...? How about a...?



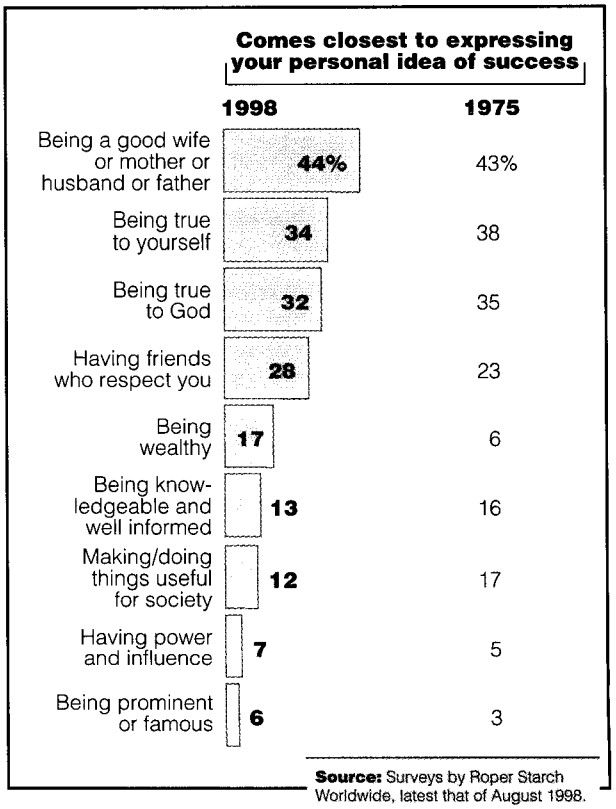
Note: Sample is adults 30 years and over.
Source: Survey by Roper Center at the University of Connecticut for *Reader's Digest*, 1996.

Question: Here is a list of some products and appliances people have in their homes. Do you...?



Note: Asterisk indicates question asked in 1981. Dash indicates question not asked in the 1980s.
Source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide, latest that of August 1998.

Question: People have different ideas about what it means to be successful. Which one or two things...?



Source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide, latest that of August 1998.

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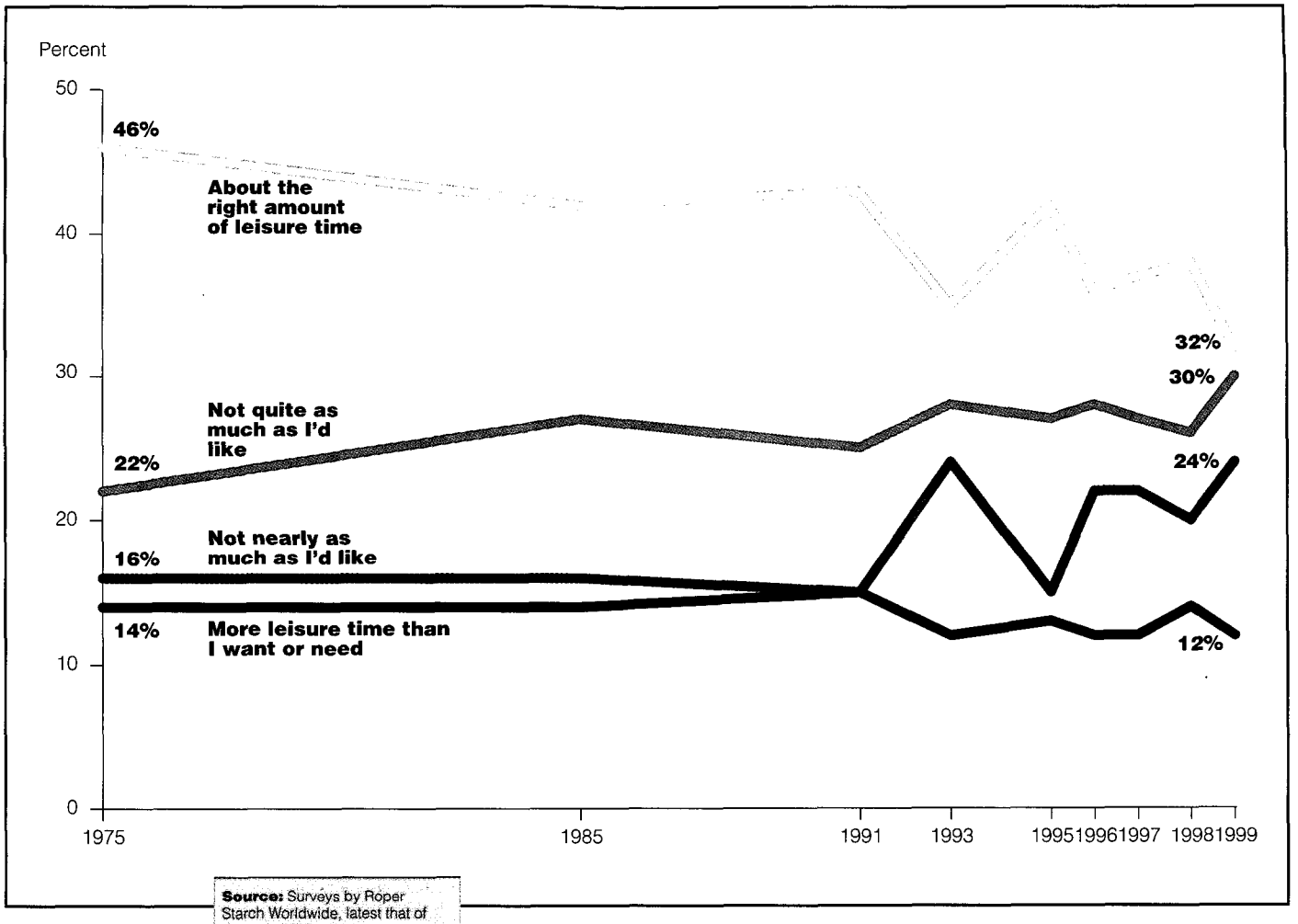
Down Time

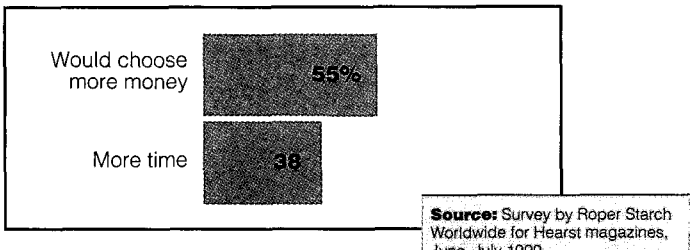
Today about a third of Americans say they have about the right amount of leisure time. Slightly more than 10 percent say they have more than they want or need. At the other end of the spectrum, around a quarter say they don't have nearly as much time as they'd like. That's up from 16 percent 25 years ago. When Americans are asked to choose between more time or more money, they generally choose the cash. But when given a narrower frame of reference—an extra week of vacation or an extra week of pay—a majority opt for the extra vacation time.

Question: Thinking of the amount of leisure time you have for things that interest you personally, would you say you have...?



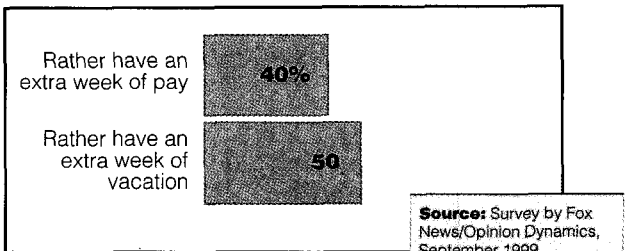
Source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide, latest that of October 1999.

Question: If you could have more of one or the other in your life, but not more of both, which...



Source: Survey by Roper Starch Worldwide for Hearst magazines, June–July 1999.

Question: Which would you...?



Source: Survey by Fox News/Opinion Dynamics, September 1999.

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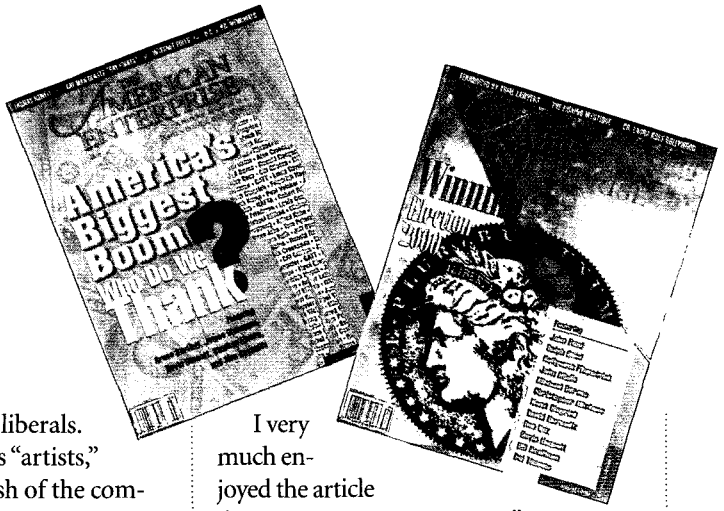
the Mail



I was delighted to read the critique of the gay Left by Justin Raimondo ("A Gay Man Decries Gay Rights," March). He rightly notes that most of the gay rights movement seeks to use the government to enforce their views, while condemning their opponents who do the same. He is also correct that a free society would have no sodomy laws. Conservatives who believe in limited government should therefore support removing such laws.

But one conservative principle Raimondo ignores: equality before the law. Raimondo's neutral state which would neither penalize nor reward homosexual behavior does not currently exist. The state is not neutral towards homosexuals in numerous ways, such as the right to marry, to adopt, to inherit if there is no will, and to serve in the military. One solution (which I suspect Raimondo favors) is for the state to have *no* role in these areas. As long as it does, the conservative solution must be no government discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation—which does not prevent individuals or groups from expressing disapproval of homosexuality.

Raimondo is too generous when he says no major religious conservative has called for legal measures against homosexuals. They do not need to when those legal measures are already in place. I hope this article will contribute to the development of a principled and coherent conservative approach to the laws governing gays.

Nigel Ashford
Bowling Green State University

As an architect, I was pleasantly surprised bythe article "Anti-Monuments" (March). Catesby Leigh correctly describes the revulsion many architects have towards portraying heroism in our new monuments. The reason? Most prominent architects are liberals. They consider themselves "artists," above the pedestrian crush of the common man for whom they allegedly design and build and they feel no responsibility to the people or events they are supposedly memorializing.

Frank Lloyd Wright once said, "Doctors bury their mistakes, architects just plant ivy." I say, Bring on the gardeners for the WWII memorial.

Marc Atkinson
Tujunga, California

Scott Walter's " Lawyers Against Democracy" (April/May) rang a bell. He writes, "companies now often huddle with hostile lawyers and agree to send customers 'coupons' good for small discounts or refunds…few [of which] are ever redeemed," while the lawyers take their contingency fees in cash off the face value of the settlement.

About five years ago I received a package of coupons which purported to offer small discounts ($10 to $50) from several major airlines, as part of a settlement of a class action-suit on behalf of airline passengers. But when I sent in one of the coupons, I learned they could not be used if my fare were already discounted, as nearly all air fares are. I was never able to use a single coupon. I believe they expire this year.

It seems to this layman that the lawyers who made this settlement on behalf of airline passengers like me betrayed the interests of their clients and should be sued. If an ambitious young attorney is reading this, I'd like to let him know that this is one class-action suit in which I would gladly participate!

Taras Wolansky
Leonia, New Jersey

I very much enjoyed the article "Lawyers Against Democracy." As a former aide to Senator Faircloth, I just wanted to correct one detail: Attorney John Edwards actually spent $6.15 million of his own money to defeat Faircloth, not $3.2 million. That was 73 percent of his total funds. Now he is talking about running for President. God help us!

Peter Hans
Washington, D.C.

To say William Vande Kopple's "Fishing Around in the Dark" (April/May) was a great story is to say that the USS *Missouri* was a pretty big boat.

While these days my fishing is usually confined to daylight and pre-dawn hours, I have fished at night, and Vande Kopple's article took me back to other times and places where I could almost smell the fish and the water. I could have sworn I felt a mosquito bite as well, but my wife says I was hallucinating.

I also used to ice fish but find now that cold weather depresses the daylights out of me. In the winter I tend to read about fishing and build lures. Vande Kopple's article is one that I will keep and re-read time and again to help bring me out of the winter slough of despond.

Marcus W. Koechig
Trumbull, Connecticutt

In "Full-contact Politics" (April/May) David Horowitz hits the nail on the head. He elegantly expresses what President Eisenhower said back in the 1950s: Republicans don't know how to fight.

Edward J. Mantzey
El Paso, Texas

The American Enterprise welcomes your comments. Send to "The Mail," The American Enterprise, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Or fax to (202) 862-5867. Or e-mail TheAmericanEnterprise@compuserve.com. Please include your address and phone number. Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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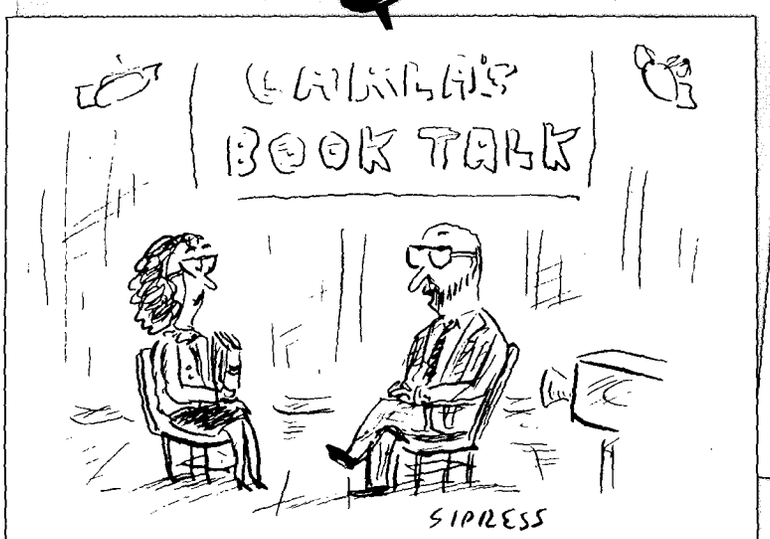
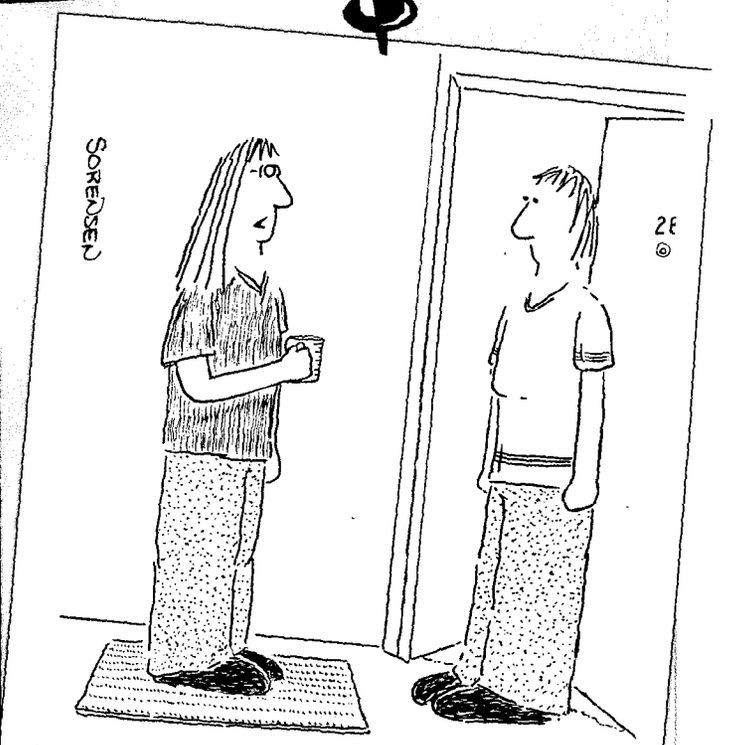
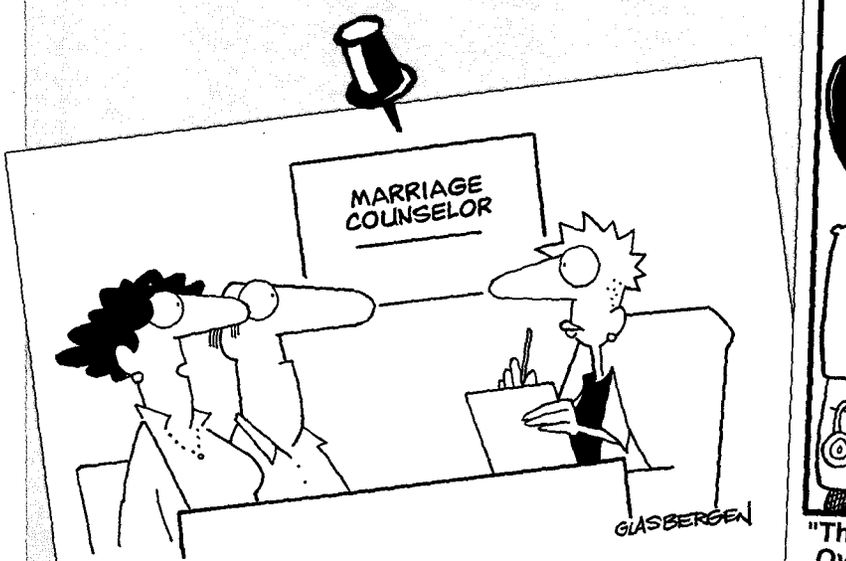


I don't feel that bad reviews reflect on me personally, Carla, as my books tend to write themselves.



"Can I borrow a cup of Tollhouse cookies?"



"He didn't fall in love with someone on the computer. He fell in love with the computer!"

"The tests confirmed my suspicions, Mr. White. Over the last few months, you've developed a small, but apparently harmless cult following!"

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4. The Washington Times
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7. Christian Science Monitor
8. Harvard Business Review
9. National Review
10. ABA Journal
11. **This Week with Sam & Cokie**
12. **NBC Nightly News**
13. **Think Tank with Ben Wattenberg**
14. Journal of American Medical Association
15. The New Republic
16. Technology Review
17. Fortune
18. **ABC World News Tonight**
19. **Fox News Sunday**
20. Financial Times
21. Forbes
22. Legal Times
23. The New England Journal of Medicine
24. Association Management
25. Foreign Affairs

*Survey of Congressional Leadership by Erdos and Morgan. Think Tank also ranked in the top ten most objective and enjoyable television programs in surveys of Executive Leadership, State and Local Leadership and Education Leadership.

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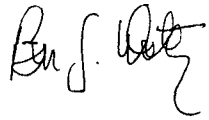
bwattenberg@aei.org

NEWS FROM THINK TANK

Delighted to be re-scheduled on **KCET-Los Angeles** filling the old Firing Line slot at 3:00 PM Saturdays Next **Think Tank** asks the question all America wants an answer to: "Is This the End of the Business Cycle As We Know It?" (at least the 50% who own stocks want the answer)...Program feeds February 24... Welcome to **WEAO** and **WNEO**, Cleveland-Akron-Youngstown....In 1999 two programs broke all our records for email, by far: an extended interview and display of the works of neo-traditional sculptor Frederick Hart (Vietnam Memorial *Three Soldiers*) and our retrospective of Norman Rockwell. The thrust of the mail was quite vigorous: "There's something wrong with modern art." We have begun work on a new **Think Tank** one-hour special: "Is There a Renaissance of Traditional Art"...and big news: starting later this year we expect to be on a schedule yielding up to FOUR **Think Tank** specials per year...finally, thanks to **KCTS-Seattle** for the new time on Sunday afternoons.

Best,



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...7 SEASONS, 300 PROGRAMS, 400 GUESTS AND COUNTING...

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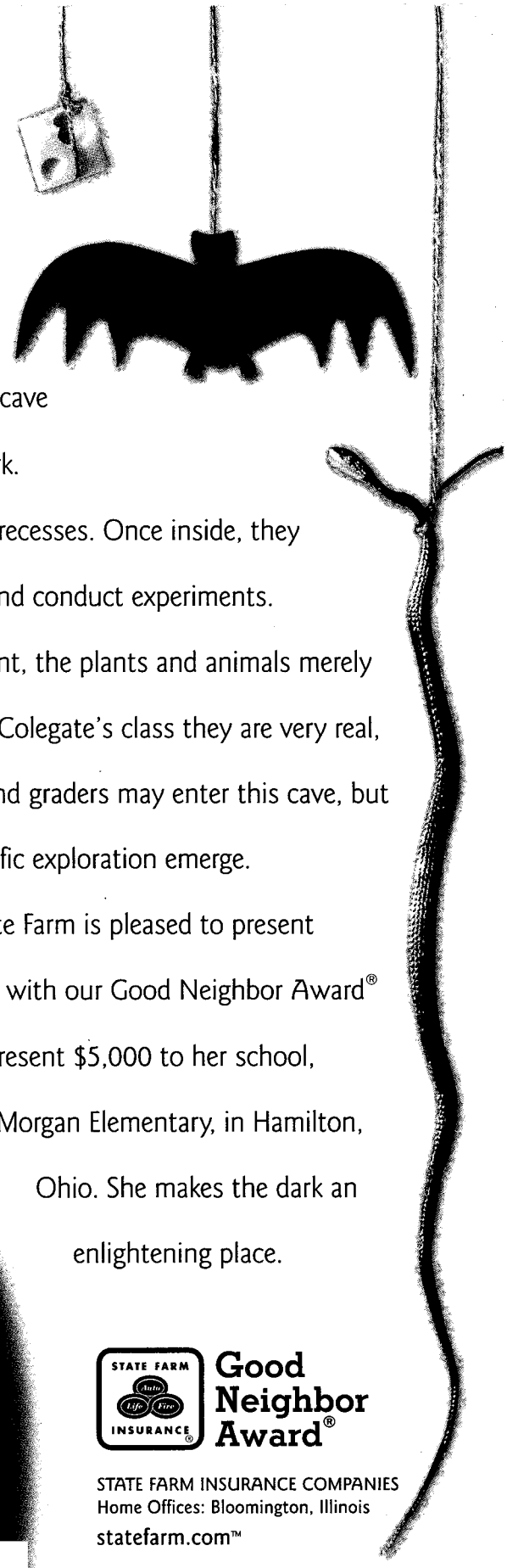
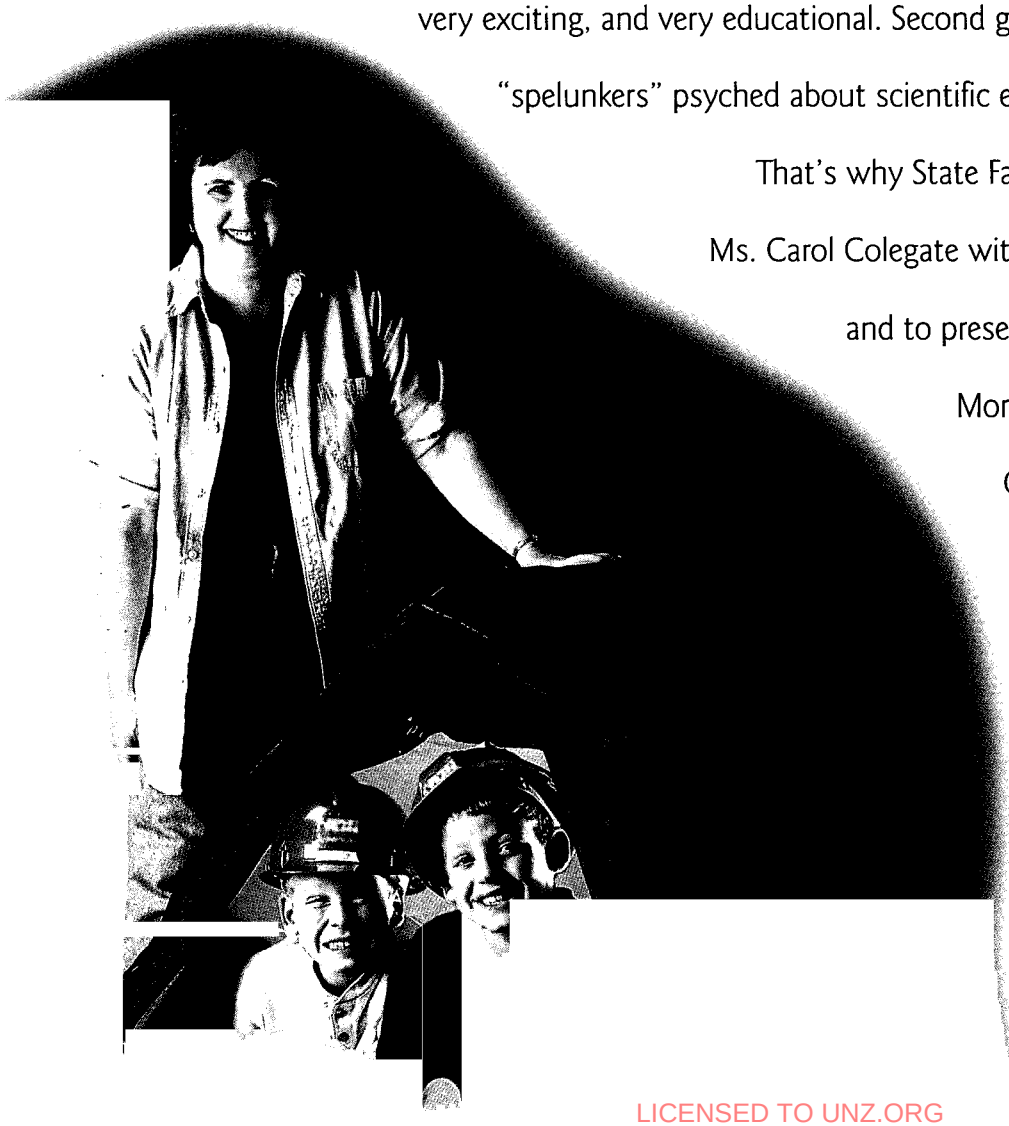
Ms. Colegate likes to keep her students in the dark.



Deep within Ms. Colegate's classroom lies a secret cave. A cave filled with bats, spiders, scorpions and other denizens of the dark.

Two by two, second graders are sent in to explore its dank recesses. Once inside, they must record the temperature, note various sights and sounds, and conduct experiments.

And though this creepy cavern is only a blanket-covered tent, the plants and animals merely pictures, and its pungent aroma made by moldy cheese, to Ms. Colegate's class they are very real, very exciting, and very educational. Second graders may enter this cave, but "spelunkers" psyched about scientific exploration emerge.



That's why State Farm is pleased to present Ms. Carol Colegate with our Good Neighbor Award® and to present $5,000 to her school, Morgan Elementary, in Hamilton, Ohio. She makes the dark an enlightening place.

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